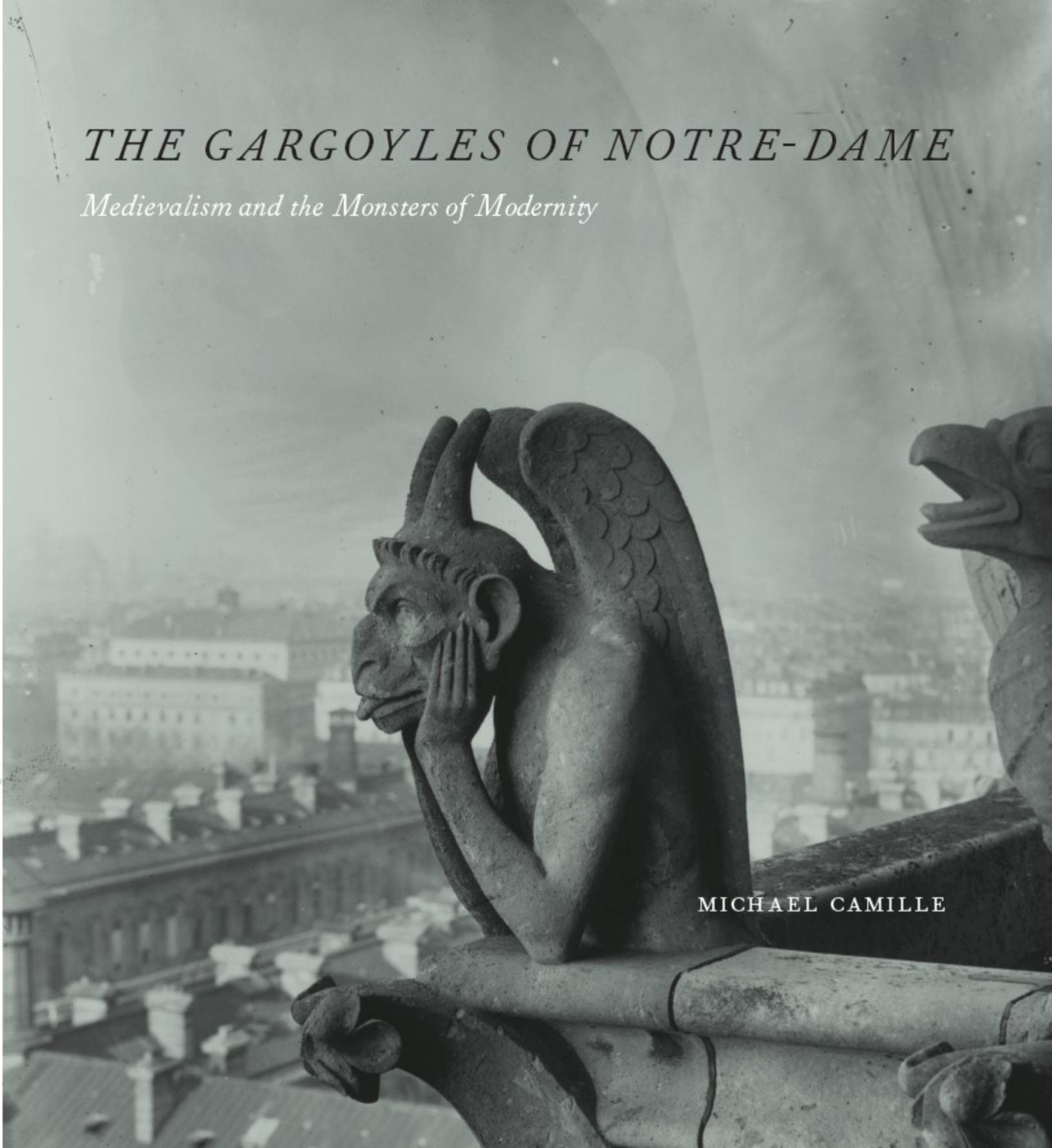
THE GARGOYLES OF NOTRE-DAME

Medievalism and the Monsters of Modernity



MICHAEL CAMILLE

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MICHAEL CAMILLE

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MICHAEL CAMILLE (1958–2002) was professor of art history at the University of Chicago and the author, most recently, of *The Medieval Art of Love: Objects and Subjects of Desire* and *Mirror in Parchment: The Luttrell Psalter and the Making of Medieval England*, the latter copublished by the University of Chicago Press.

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Preface

There are many churches dedicated to Notre Dame but only one Notre-Dame de Paris. Located on the east end of the Île-de-la-Cité, the cathedral is the spiritual and geographic center not only of Paris, but of the whole of France. Built between 1163 and 1250, it remains one of the first and most innovative Gothic structures in Europe. The facade, begun around 1200, with its massive twin towers, central rose window, and three cavernous sculpted portals, marks the very face of France (fig. 1).[1] But as they stand in the cathedral square admiring it, what many visitors do not realize is that many of the stones that we see today—now white and gleaming from the costly "high-tech" restoration of 1993–2000—are modern. We can, in fact, date them precisely. They were installed between 1843 and 1864, when the great architect Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc and his partner Jean-Baptiste Lassus undertook the enormous job of planning and overseeing a restoration of the edifice. It was the most important restoration project of the nineteenth century. The team replaced destroyed sculptures of the west facade, provided a new steeple, reconstructed the two transepts and transformed the appearance of flying buttresses on the exterior nave and choir, and supervised changes in the interior elevation.

Notre-Dame on the Île-de-la-Cité quickly became "degree zero" from whence all points in the country are measured. The "new" cathedral became a civic, centralizing symbol of the power, not of bishops and canons or even of kings, but of the state, which took control of the structure during the nineteenth century and has recently spent another twenty-one million francs to restore it once again.[2]

To today's tourists, the gargoyles are perhaps the most appealing element of this magnificent structure. But they, too, are modern. Only since the middle of the past century has this particular cast of ghouls screamed from their stone lungs at the square below. Dozens of these creatures thrust out their gullets from the two towers of the west facade as well as along both sides of the nave and from the choir at the east end. Better known still are the strange stone creatures who peer down from the projecting corner buttresses of the balustrade that runs horizontally around the base of the western towers (fig. 2). The most famous of them all is the horned, winged demon who gazes over Paris from the left buttress on the front of the north tower, his

1. West facade of Notre-Dame, Paris, January 2000. (Photo: Stuart Michaels.) (opposite)

2. Chimeras on the western corner buttresses of the south tower, Notre-Dame, Paris (nos. 22 and 24), January 2000. (Photo: Stuart Michaels.)

3. L.L., "Chimère de Notre-Dame," Notre-Dame, Paris (no. 6), ca. 1920. (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

hands resting pensively on his chin, his tongue protruding. The "star" of our story, he broods over this book, the unique and the single most memorable creation of the nineteenth-century restorer and architectural theorist Viollet-le-Duc (fig. 3). Though not a gargoyle in the proper sense of the term (since he does not serve as a drainpipe) he has nonetheless become the very essence of gargoyleness, the quintessence of the modern idea of the medieval. Like a Baudelairean flaneur he surveys Paris with eyes sunk deep, not in the soul-destroying seven deadly sins of the church fathers, but in the innumerable and sensational vices of the nineteenth-century metropolis. This figure, eventually to be known as "le Stryge," will take center stage in this cast of creatures, who are both audience and performers in the drama of destruction and reconstruction, not only of the cathedral but also of the city surrounding it.

It seems unbelievable now, but this book actually began as a solitary footnote to a book I began to write on the history of the gargoyle in Gothic art and architecture. One footnote grew into what I thought would then be just a short historiographi-

cal introduction. When this became too big, even for an article, I realized that the gargoyles of Notre-Dame had taken over not only my desk, but my life as well. The chimeras seemed to harangue me from their heights on the balustrade every time I passed by the west facade of the cathedral—"Hey You!" their open mouths seemed to shout. "We deserve a study of our own! Get to work!" In giving in to gargoyles I have learned a great deal. What these insistent monsters have taught me is the impossibility of viewing the art of the Middle Ages without looking past and through the nineteenth century, without appreciating our own and the cathedral's substantial modernity. This should not preclude our wanting to understand the Middle Ages as a distinct historical period; we find, however, that it is hardly ever as distinct or as separate as we might want to think, but always flowing into other periods, haunting other epochs, emerging where we least expect it, in romanticism, surrealism, and even postmodernity. In writing the first-ever art-historical study of this group of well-known Parisian sculptures, my point is not that they are modern and therefore less important than the superb twelfth- and thirteenth-century sculptures still in situ on the west facade. Rather than view them as "not medieval" I hope to show their instrumentality in having helped construct the very idea of the medieval. Our most cherished cultural monuments are not the neatly packaged products of a distant and therefore irresponsible historical past. Cathedrals are above all spectacular sites in the here and now, sites that are continually being reinterpreted, reconstructed, and interrupted by new monsters of our own making. The visual record—drawings, prints, and photographs presented in this book, many for the first time—forms a memorial to a lost monument, because, as the last chapter reveals, many of these sculptures have deteriorated so rapidly as to have become almost illegible, destroyed by the air pollution of the city that gives them breath and life. Most of the views of the chimeras in the book are from older photographs taken when their lines were crisper. A record of their condition in the year 2000 can be found in the appendix. For most people visiting Paris today the chimeras are recognized like old friends. They are part of the public fantasy of the great city, a focal point of Parisian modernity, as integral to the pulse of modern Paris as Baudelaire's flaneur and Walter Benjamin's arcades.

One of the problems I have encountered in writing this book is finding names for some of these strange creatures. Whereas the nineteenth-century jamb statues on the portals of the west front can, like their medieval forebears, each be identified as a specific prophet or saint according to their traditional iconographic attributes, the fifty-four monsters on the balustrade go by different names at different moments in their history. Their identities, let alone their meanings, are not fixed. Some, like the pensive demon (no. 6; see the appendix), have had many names, beginning with "le Stryge," or "the Vampire." Others have names like "la Rongeur," or "the Devourer" (no. 14),

to describe their actions. For the most part they were designated simply as "beasts" in the restoration records. It is in one of these records, dated 1849, that Viollet-le-Duc first described them as "chimères," or chimeras. In France this has become the standard term applied to the monsters, and it is what I shall use here. I have given them descriptive names, but I also cite them by a number keyed to a plan in the appendix. They were never intended to be viewed in any systematic order.

The gargoyles proper—the rain spouts—were placed higher on the towers and form a motley mass of shapes turning into mouths that seem to curl chaotically outward from the edifice. At the same time, they form a tense and ordered series of levels that pull one's gaze ever upward.

From far away, and especially in the evening, the silhouettes of the chimeras are as crucial to the Paris skyline as the Eiffel Tower. But they can also appear exceedingly ominous, when the warm limestone seems to breathe and the creatures take on the fluttering forms of eerie birds that have just touched down to perch on a Gothic rookery.

If we climb the stairs to the balustrade between the towers, we can get a closer look at them. From here their granular, mottled bodies seem to be porous, suggesting the morbidity and dampness of crypts, or cliffs that have eroded away from centuries of pounding waves. Indeed they are in a sense sea creatures, since shells and other fossils can still be seen embedded in the tertiary limestone that gives them substance and forms their skin. Like all great works of art, they are an endless source of fascination. The English essayist Sacheverell Sitwell in his *Gothic Europe* (1969) was mystified by them: "The hobgoblins and chimeras have been so long up there, and it is difficult now to know how genuine they are. How much were they restored, or renewed even, in the time of the Middle Ages revived and come to life again with Claude Frollo, Pierre Gringoire the poet, and Quasimodo the bell-ringer with the towers of Notre-Dame in the distance in the last scene of all? . . . If one climbs the wearying and winding stair to the parapet or gallery of demons, it is true that more than one of them of blackish stone now resembling cement in texture, has the claws of his nails suspiciously sharpened."[3]

It was their fate to become models from the very beginning. No sooner had they been created than they were being copied in drawings and prints by artists such as the great printmaker Charles Méryon, and their stone forms memorialized in the new medium of photography by Henri Le Secq. It was these artists and photographers, who clambered up beside them even before they had been finished, who provided us with detailed understanding of the chimeras, close-up views which have helped make them the archetypal monsters for our time. There are birds, shrouded in gauzy masks with eyeholes cut through them, or else crazy, squeaking, parrotlike passerines with

pointed ears, perched on the parapet as though just landed after a long flight up from the depths of hell. There are things winged but whose heads snarl like those of sleek, night-prowling cats and leopards, or else lumpish, bloated, demonic bodies, poised to pounce or straining and clutching at the stone from whence they have sprung. Even though lacking lower bodies, they pulse with sexual energy. A few have attributes that suggest they are gendered. Some have the Herculean bodies of giants, like the half-human lion-man whose chin recedes to form a muzzle, while others have the wizened dugs of old women. Most of these ferocious and maleficent physiognomies, some gloating, laughing, or screaming, share one thing: they all look down on *us*.

The stony regard of these ghosts that have returned to haunt us from the medieval past is, I shall argue, the gaze of modernity and its disenchantment with the world. The monsters that lurk above the square, or parvis, today are products of the post-romantic imagination. Viollet-le-Duc began his entry "Restoration" in his *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture* with the now-famous statement "Both the word and the thing are modern," the adjective "modern," having itself only just come into use.[4] The medieval, or at least its reinvention in the nineteenth century, was constructed in opposition to and out of this idea of the modern. Already in 1844 Viollet-le-Duc had written in the *Annales archéologiques* that the current fascination with the past was a sign of despair with the present.[5] The great cathedrals of the Middle Ages, like Notre-Dame, had originally been built as symbols of the promised heavenly Jerusalem that would one day come to earth, as described in the book of Revelation. But by the nineteenth century these buildings, ruined by revolution and decay, looked no longer to the future. Paradoxically, the impulse of modernity to rupture historical continuity sought to reconstruct historical monuments as unchanging symbols of an *imagined* past. It is precisely this difference, this split between the myth of their medieval origins and their modern function as emblems of loss, that makes the chimeras of Notre-Dame so compelling. Promethean creations, they now claim an autonomous existence, coming to life not only in relation to their own Dr. Frankenstein—Viollet-le-Duc—but in response to the projections and desires of countless viewers over the next century and a half, including myself.

* * *

Part 1 of this book explores the creation of the chimeras of Notre-Dame and the hundreds of gargoyles, first in relation to their creators Viollet-le-Duc and Lassus and then in relation to the turbulent city which their stony eyes survey. The chimeras were carved by a gifted and prolific but forgotten mid-nineteenth-century sculptor, Victor Pyanet, whose role in the project is described in chapter 2 for the first time. In

the following chapters the physiognomic intensity of the gargoyles' expressions are related to the romantic writings of Victor Hugo and the caricatures of Grandville and Daumier but also to the darker politics of the midcentury, during which the Gothic was a contested category of cultural politics. One particular argument that I shall make and that will no doubt disturb those who continue to see the pensive demon as a benign, if slightly brooding, romantic "mascot" for the city of Paris is that he is in part a virulently racist icon. Along with the only human among the fifty-four monsters—an old Jew—the hook-nosed demon is related to Viollet-le-Duc's theories of racial inequality, having features that are more Semitic than satanic. In their massive muscularity and animality many of the animal monsters also recall the fear of the "dangerous" bestial laboring classes after the revolution of 1848.

This was also the period when medieval Paris was being systematically destroyed by Georges-Eugène Haussmann to make way for the "grands boulevards." Likewise, in the microcosm of the métropole, as people called Notre-Dame at this time, the decaying medieval fabric was swept away and a new "old" cathedral of myth was being created out of fresh-cut stone. In this brand-new Paris, an imagined medieval past came back to haunt the present in the guise of the chimeras. No longer viewed as monsters of the medieval edge, the wild things and hybrid creatures of the medieval forest, they transformed, as all monsters must, to become the abject chimeras of modernity: the Jew, the revolutionary worker, the prostitute, the hysterical woman, and the homosexual.

Part 2 looks at how, during the past hundred and fifty years, the chimeras have inspired numerous artists and writers. For it is not the view from below that has dominated our vision of the chimeras but our place among them, as spectators of their spectating. The restoration of Notre-Dame de Paris created not only a new series of images but a new space up there on the balustrade, a site of spectacle, which, along with the panoramas, the boulevards, and the arcades, provided another locus for the construction of modern urban allegory. Most famous of these interpreters was Méryon, who identified with the melancholy demon and renamed him "le Stryge," or "the Vampire," in his famous etching of 1853. Méryon's manic self-inscriptions have to be seen in the context not only of his mental illness but also of his growing fears about the decline of French society. At exactly the same time, early photographers like Le Secq were clambering with their heavy equipment up to the balustrade, which they used as a site for the exploration of selfhood through a totally new medium—photography.

At the fin de siècle, reflecting the gender issues of the time, the chimeras changed sex and came to represent the feared female predator, the prostitute, and even a recently invented category—the sexual invert. It is not surprising that the balustrade

and its monsters became the favorite hangout of the young Sigmund Freud during his visit to Paris in 1895. In modernity everything enters into circulation, and even though the chimeras had been created as part of a myth of fixity and "medieval" stability, soon they were on the move. The final chapter explores the ways in which these creatures have recently been commodified and set loose in our culture, starting as miniaturized, domesticated toys and culminating on the Internet, where they have become virtual and global ghouls, guardians of a future Gothic.

Acknowledgments

In the five years spent researching and writing this book my time has been divided between two gargoyle-infested places, Paris and the University of Chicago. In Paris I am most grateful to Jannie Mayer, conservateur en chef du patrimoine, for granting me access to the original drawings of Viollet-le-Duc in her care and for providing photographs of the chimeras she had taken during the recent restoration. At the library of the Médiathéque de l'architecture et du patrimoine I am grateful to all the staff and to Francois Macé de Lépinay, conservateur général du patrimoine, and to Anne de Mondenard of the photographic collection for their advice. For access to the balustrade I must thank M. Fonquernie, directeur de patrimoine, and the cathedral's architect en chef, Sophie Walhain. I am also indebted to Jean-Louis Cohen, director of the new Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine at the Palais de Chaillot, and to its curator, Dominique Le Font Reaulx, for their encouragement. Other French colleagues who helped at crucial moments include Eric Blanchegorge, conservateur of the Musee Vivenel at Compiègne, Vivienne Huchard, director of the Musée national du Moyen Âge, and Professor Ségolène Le Men. I found more bibliographic resources closer to home in the bookshop of my neighbor, Alan Dhouailly, and in the postcard stalls of the flea market of the Marché d'Aligre. I am deeply grateful to the owners of a private collection of drawings by Viollet-le-Duc and Lassus related to Notre-Dame for allowing me to examine and to reproduce these important unpublished works here for the first time.

The University of Chicago provided me with a fellowship at the École des hautes études in Paris in 1997–98, thanks to the then dean of the humanities, Philip Gossett. His successor, Janel Mueller, also proved a warm supporter of the project and understood my need to be in France. Among my valued colleagues in the Department of Art History I want to thank Joel Snyder for helping me understand nineteenth-century photographic ideas, as well as Katherine Taylor, Martha Ward, Barbara Stafford, Reinhold Heller, Tom Gunning, Yuri Zivian, Tom Mitchell, and Tom Cummins. My two colleagues in medieval art, Robert Nelson and Linda Seidel, helped at

the very inception of this project. In 1989 we three received a grant from the Getty Trust to explore together the prism of modernity through which the Middle Ages is constructed and its artistic remains are displayed. It was during that adventure that many seeds were sown from which the present book arises. I am also happy to be able to acknowledge the help of a number of my graduate students—Riccardo Marchi, Eileen Michal, Matthew Shoaf, Kerry Boeye, and Patrick Hajovsky—and the undergraduates who took my course on gargoyles of the University of Chicago campus, especially Rose Grayson, who has since kept me informed about their amazing commercial proliferation.

At the University of Chicago Press I want to thank Morris Philipson for his friendship and advice and my ever-vigilant editor Susan Bielstein, who has never "gargoyled out."

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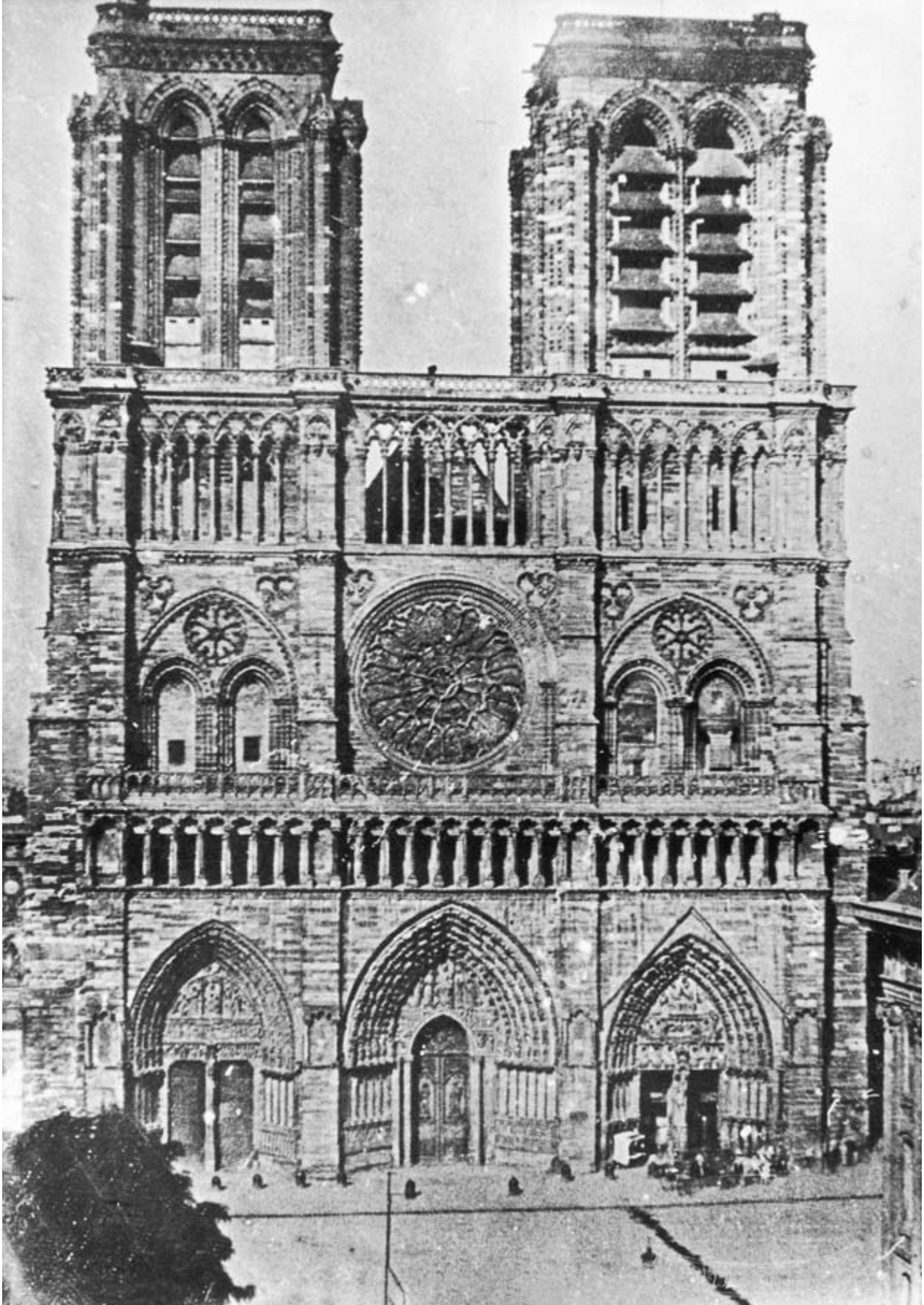
Paris, February 2001

Abbreviations of Locations and Sources of Illustrations

AC	Author's collection	xvii
BHVP	Bibliothèque historique de la ville de Paris	
BNF	Bibliothèque nationale de France	
CNMHS	La Caisse nationale des monuments historiques et des sites	
MAP	Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Paris	

PART I

Restoration



4. Vincent Chevalier, *Notre Dame*, ca. 1840. Daguerreotype. Collection of Octave Laborde. MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

1. Monsters of Reason

THE GARGOYLES OF VIOLLET-LE-DUC

It is not the sleep of reason that produces monsters but more than anything else rationality, vigilant and unsleeping.

GILLES DELEUZE AND FÉLIX GUATTARI, *Anti-Oedipus*[1]

One can hardly recognize Notre-Dame as we know it today from the early daguerreotype made by Vincent Chevalier just before 1840, an image in which the great cathedral appears as a disintegrating patchwork pile (fig. 4). In their 1843 project for the restoration, Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc and Jean-Baptiste Lassus described the structure not as a church, but as a ruin.[2] The second part of their forty-page text is a chronological account of the gradual destruction of this once magnificent Gothic edifice, not only by neglect and time but also by the violence of human hands.

Sculptures of the dead rising from their graves in the lintel over the central doorway had been removed by the architect Jacques-Germain Soufflot in 1771 to allow the royal canopy to enter the church during processions, and during the French Revolution all signs of "féodalité" were suppressed. This meant almost all the jamb figures of the facade and the twenty-eight colossal statues of the gallery of kings were removed in two deliberate and drawn-out stages starting in 1793.[3] Yet the Revolution, which for a time turned the cathedral into a "temple of reason" and caused its near destruction, was also paradoxically the catalyst for its eventual preservation. As a result of the expropriations of church property in 1789, the government became directly responsible for the administration and upkeep of churches. After liturgical rites were reestablished in 1803, an effort was made to repair the "métropole," as the cathedral was called, but restorers clad the fragile areas with a thin veneer of stone attached by iron pins that oxidized and damaged the structure even further. It was only under the July Monarchy (1830–48), the new bourgeois-led, centralized state, that serious steps were taken. Although the cathedral was nominally the financial responsibility of the local Department of the Seine, the importance of the basilica at the focus of national life made it the responsibility of the Catholic arm of the government under the Ministère de la justice et des cultes. After a decade of public pressure from notables like Victor Hugo, a competition for its restoration was finally announced in 1842.

To understand the genesis of the fifty-four chimeras that crown the balustrade of Notre-Dame, it is important to see them as part of the larger restoration project that took some twenty years to complete. Significantly, the two architects did not include them in their winning proposal, presented in January 1843, and never so many gargoyles as were eventually installed. This discrepancy is usually explained as Viollet-le-Duc's taking his own more radical initiatives after the death of his collaborator in 1857. However, as we shall see, the chimeras were all in place by this date. This we know from the *Journal des travaux*, a remarkably detailed day-by-day record of the restoration. The *Journal* begins on 30 April 1844 and stops 385 pages later, on 28 August 1864. This source, along with drawings and other documents, will be fundamental to my argument in this opening chapter, which will not only reconstruct the chronology of the chimeras but attempt to answer some larger questions.[4] Why, if not conceived as part of the initial scheme presented by the architects, did the gargoyles and chimeras so soon become an integral part of their restoration project? Were they solely the products of Viollet-le-Duc's imagination, or did Lassus also play a role? Another issue is whether these sculptures are in fact best understood under the category of restorations—that is, as replacements of lost or damaged elements of the original medieval building—or instead as totally new and unique creations of the nineteenth century.[5]

1 · *The 1843 Project and Its Transformation*

In their winning proposal, Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc argued that Notre-Dame was a monument that demanded a totally new approach to restoration. It was impossible to apply the conservative standards that one might in the case of an ancient structure like the Roman triumphal arch at Orange. Such a monument could legitimately be left as a ruin, but with a building that still retained its practical and symbolic function, the architect-restorer was obliged to return it to its former glory. Although young—Viollet-le-Duc was twenty-nine and Lassus thirty-eight—the two men entered the competition with the advantage of being already well-established members of a new, professional generation of architect-restorers. Lassus had been in charge of another Gothic building in the capital, the Sainte-Chapelle, from 1836, and Viollet-le-Duc had been at work on the Abbey of la Madeleine at Vézelay since 1840. These initiatives had been taken under the auspices of the Historic Monuments Commission, which had been set up with the purpose of compiling a list of protected monuments and allocating grants for restoration. Since 1834 its inspector general had been the flamboyant and indefatigable Prosper Mérimée, a close friend of Viollet-le-Duc. However, the memory of recent disastrous campaigns, such as the one at the Abbey

of Saint-Denis, meant that restoration was a highly contentious issue.

Another official group, the Committee on Art and Monuments, led by the "archéologue" and iconographer Adolphe-Napoléon Didron (1806–67), had recommended in 1839 that the major principle of restoration should be to restore what was already there and not under any circumstances to add anything new. Didron questioned the necessity of reconstructing sculpture that had disappeared entirely and cited the example of the gallery of kings at Notre-Dame, asking, "Should these sites not remain empty? The fact that they are empty is, after all, historically significant."[6] Initially opposed to the restoration of Notre-Dame, he had stated in *L'Univers* in 1841 that "Notre-Dame was solid and has no need to be repaired."[7] Yet only four years later in his own journal, *Annales archéologiques*, he published the report submitted by le comte de Montalembert that approved the restoration in which the latter praised the selection of Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc to lead the project. De Montalembert nonetheless expressed concern that because they were architects, they could not keep themselves from making something "new."[8] In 1845 Jean-Phillippe Schmit, another member of the Commitee on Arts and Monuments, published a study on the restoration of churches which stated, "The original character of a monument . . . must be preserved and not destroyed by an ambitious restoration. A old man loses his dignity when his grey hairs are dyed, his wrinkles masked, and he is dressed in modern clothes; he becomes then, an old young man, a ridiculous caricature."[9]

The press lampooned the restoration of Notre-Dame using exactly the same metaphors. In 1856 the *Journal amusant* published an article titled "The Old Monuments Have a Wash" (Les Vieux monuments ont fait toilette). The piece came out when work was well underway to install new statues in the jambs of the west portals. An illustration by Bertall depicts blackened old statues of the kings and queens wearing false white noses (fig. 5). The text reads:

> And the antique Notre-Dame, the old cathedral of King Philippe Auguste that time has taken seven or eight centuries to blacken—take a look, it has been scraped, remade anew, competing in its whiteness and elegance with the little, well-built temple on the rue Laffitte! At least Gothic monuments do not lose in this their appearance of venerable antiquity, keeping their beautiful lines and elegant proportions, but what can one say of the restoration of the old statues that decorate them? The majority no longer have their noses; moreover, on these thin, sulfurous, ecstatic dreamers have been added the nose of the Apollo Belvedere, this straight nose dividing the face, this sensual nose, a pagan nose, a nose that would serve to damn this wise man when he presents himself thus renosed at the day of judgment. And this newest nose that one could make stands out on the blackened faces, strikes the eye, troubles the contemplative spirit, evoking goodness knows what idea of masquerade—Gothic with a false nose.[10]

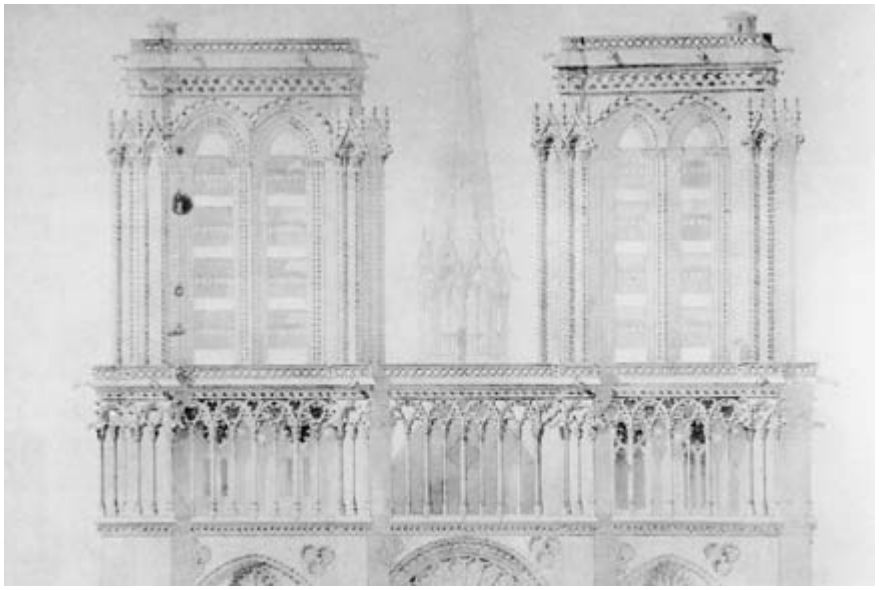
5. Bertall [Albert d'Arnoux], The statues of Notre-Dame with new noses. From *Le Journal amusant*, February 1856. (Photo: author.)

The article ends with an attack on the "rage for smartness that has overrun our old monuments." A derogatory phrase that appears over and over in the popular press and in the official arguments of both those for and those against restoration is "remise à neuf," or "to make new."

Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc seemed equally concerned with the dangers of restoration in their 1843 project, criticizing "the ignorant zeal which adds, recuts, completes, and ends up transforming an ancient monument into a new monument." Adopting a tentative, even humble tone, the two architects tried to downplay their creative role. They described how the restorer needs to "entirely efface and forget his instincts. . . . Far be it from us to foster the idea of 'completing' so remarkably beautiful a work of art; that is arrogance that we would not have countenanced. . . . The building is surely beautiful enough that it would be pointless to want to add anything to it."[11] This reticence is visible in Viollet-le-Duc's watercolor drawing of the western facade, submitted with the winning design (fig. 6). The structure depicted looks quite different from the actual result. The rendering has a much less elaborate central spire, and there appears not a single chimera on the horizontal balustrade and far fewer projecting monsters and gargoyles on the corner pinnacles of both towers. The fact that the architects were soon to add far more expensive sculptures to the facade is even more surprising considering that they were specifically asked to cut costs from the beginning, to pare down rather than expand their scheme. They had estimated the costs at this time at 3,888,442 francs, 92 centimes, of which 658,954 francs were to underwrite construction of the new sacristy to be built alongside. They were asked to reduce this amount, and in May 1845 they produced a revised estimate of 1,973,882 francs, 67 centimes. Annexed to this revised report was a list of five categories of restoration classed according to the order of urgency, in which, significantly, "the restoration of gargoyles" appears in the very first category along with flying buttresses, roofs, and terraces.[12] The second category of urgent repairs was that of "the western facade and towers," which would eventually include the chimeras.

The plan and budget was approved by a vote in the chamber in July 1845. However, the Committee on Art and Monuments objected to reconstructing the lost portal statues from models found on other cathedrals, and so another committee of "pairs de France" was formed to reevaluate the restoration plan. This included the novelist Victor Hugo and the wealthy liberal Catholic peer le comte de Montalembert (1810–70). The latter addressed the committee's concern about "dressing up our old cathedrals in new clothes,"[13] by declaring that the two architects in charge planned to limit themselves to "carrying out essential repairs" and would not add any new decoration.

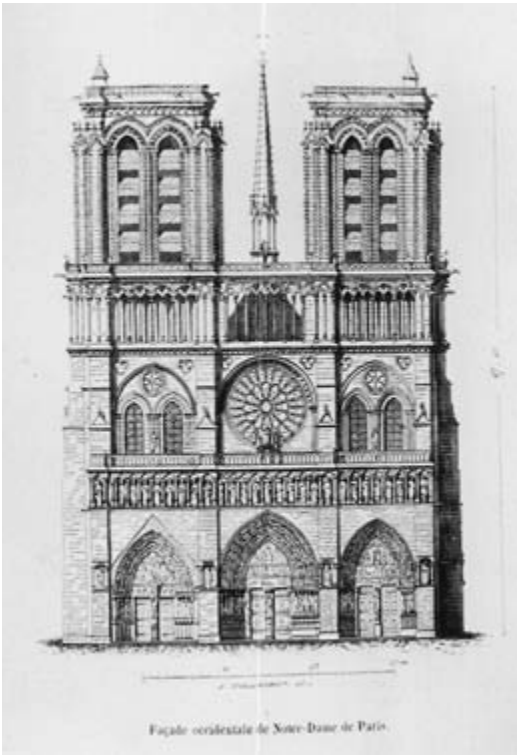
That this was in fact impossible was well understood by the architect and founder



6. J. B. Lassus and E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Projet de restauration de Notre-Dame de Paris*, 1843 (detail). Signed. Pen and watercolor. MH. 21694. MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

of the *Revue générale de l'architecture et des travaux publics*, César-Denis Daly (1811–93). He saw in the restoration competition for Notre-Dame yet another example of the conflict between those who view churches as historical monuments and those who see them as functioning religious buildings. He endorsed Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc's project over the two other entries, by Jean-Jacques Arveuf and Jean-Charles Danjoy, which, he argued, slighted the historical in favor of the religious function. Yet Daly nonetheless criticized the winners for one crucial discrepancy. To restore to the cathedral "toute sa splendeur" was not, as they argued, a matter of simple consolidation. "It is *adding* what does not exist and, as a result, *removing* what is there; it is *completion* according to a more or less vague ideal."[14]

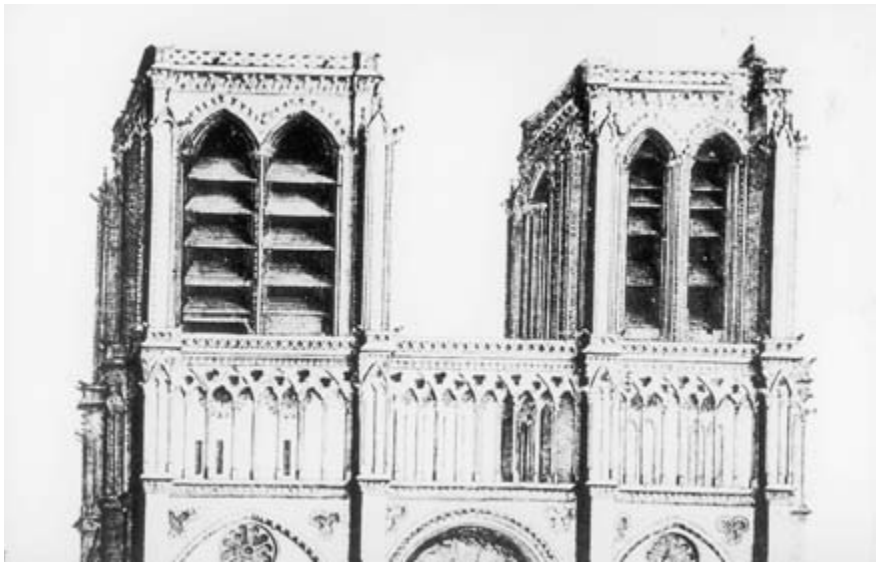
What was added after 1843 was the chimeras. Were they part of a "vague ideal," or was their appearance part of an accurate historical reconstruction? They appear clearly in an illustration of the restored west facade in the official monograph published by Viollet-le-Duc in 1856 (fig. 7). It was here that he made the strongest claim for their authenticity. "On every corner of the balustrade birds have come to perch, demons and monsters have come to squat. These picturesque figures have just been reestablished; the originals exist no more, but some of them, in falling, have left their claws attached to the stone."[15] Marcel Aubert, in his definitive early monograph on the restored cathedral, reiterated this notion, describing the chimeras as at once being



7. "Façade occidentale de Notre-Dame de Paris." From F. de Guilhermy and E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Description de Notre-Dame, cathédrale de Paris,* 1856. (Photo: author.)

"products of the extravagant imagination of Viollet-le-Duc" and having been "completely reconstructed" after fragmentary remains.[16]

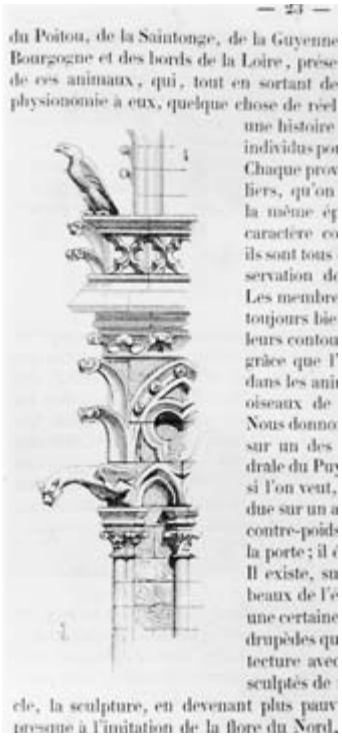
Visual evidence for Viollet-le-Duc's claim that he found remnants of beasts that once had clung to the western balustrade of Notre-Dame occurs in a drawing of the facade made in 1699. It shows shadowy profiles of what appear to be vertical or diagonally placed sculptural masses rather than horizontal gargoyles, at the four projecting corners (fig. 8). Although they seem proportionally smaller than the ones that replaced them, they clearly recall the shapes of birds. These sculptural projections occur in pairs on each of the four buttresses, indicating that there were probably originally fewer than the fifty-four that Viollet-le-Duc would eventually place around the base of the two towers. It is also significant, if we are going to argue that there *were* originally beasts on the balustrade above the tall gallery, that this particular part of the facade be understood to date from the first half of the thirteenth century. Viollet-le-Duc argued in the *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture* (hereafter *Dictionnaire*) that the whole facade was "rapidly erected toward 1235," and most scholars now agree that the two towers were erected between 1225 and 1250, the north tower being com-



8. V. Antier, drawing of Notre-Dame dated 1699, showing chimeras on the balustrade (detail). BNF, Cabinet des étampes, Va 419.

pleted first and each with subtle differences of detail. This was a period when figurative sculpture was used increasingly throughout the elevations of churches at higher levels, not only in the form of gargoyles but around window embrasures and on bell towers.[17] It is also important to remember that in the Middle Ages the two towers served the specific function of holding the great bells, eight in the north tower alone, each with its own name, sound, and distinct personality. These regulated the lives of medieval Parisians as do our clocks today. Whatever creatures had been perched at the towers' base along the balustrade, they formed part of a richly sonorous space. Their open mouths, along with those of gaping gargoyles and dragons perched on every pinnacle, served to articulate the booming voice of a building whose presence literally vibrated throughout the whole city. The bells of Notre-Dame told Parisians not only when to pray but when to get up, when to put down their tools, and when to make curfew. The early nineteenth-century cathedral had lost this temporal function in the face of the ticking clock. What made it a cadaver rather than a living building was not only its empty niches, but its silence.[18]

Part of the rationale of both architect-restorers in 1843 was to use models of other cathedrals where the sculpture was still extant to fill in the gaps. For example, the central trumeau figure of Christ, carved by the leading sculptor Adolphe-Victor Geoffroy-Dechaume, was a hybrid of that at Amiens (the arm blessing) and that at Chartres (the other arm holding the book). Were the chimeras similarly modeled



9. Viollet-le-Duc, illustration for the entry "Animals," in *Dictionnaire*, 1:23. (Photo: author.)

10. Cathedral of Notre-Dame, Laon, east side of north tower with oxen, ca. 1200. (Photo: James Austin.)

on original Gothic prototypes? In the first volume of Viollet-le-Duc's *Dictionnaire*, published in 1854, the entry "Animals" includes a profile of the west facade showing the relationship between an eagle placed on the balustrade and the projecting crockets and large winged gargoyle placed beneath it. Moreover he describes how "at the corners of the buttreses of the west front of Notre-Dame de Paris one sees also enormous sculpted beasts, which standing out against the sky, give life to these masses of stone"[19] (fig. 9). Viollet-le-Duc also refers here to the precedent of the colossal beasts found on the towers of Laon. This was another early Gothic cathedral where projecting animals played an important sculptural role on the bell towers, supposedly representing the oxen who had pulled the stones up the hill during its construction (fig. 10). These animals had also been recorded in the thirteenth-century sketchbook of Villard de Honnecourt, which was first published in a facsimile by Lassus.

Viollet-le-Duc's entry also mentions another source—the "bizarre birds" at Reims Cathedral.[20] Émile Mâle, in his influential study of medieval art, first published in

11. Viollet-le-Duc, chimeras and gargoyles on the apse of the Cathedral of Reims, after 1860. MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

12. Henri Le Secq, view of the apse of the Cathedral of Reims, 1851. MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

1898, also played on the Reims connection, reminding readers that "the very beautiful monsters which decorate the balustrade of the towers of Notre-Dame are the creations of Viollet-Le-Duc (there remained only fragments). He was inspired by those that one can still see at Reims" (fig. 11).[21] What Mâle neglects to tell us is that the beasts at Reims are themselves creations of Viollet-le-Duc! The chimeras that perch on the balustrade over the eastern end of church are not medieval at all, as can be judged from an 1851 photograph by Henri Le Secq (fig. 12). It was Viollet-le-Duc's own later restoration between 1860 and 1874 that placed these animals around the apse.[22] His remarks in the *Dictionnaire* about "bizarre birds, draped and cowled" (oiseaux bizarres, drapés, capuchonnés) refer to the lead gargoyles that were added to the edifice after a disastrous fire of 1481 and do not date from the thirteenth-century phase of building. Reims was probably a prototype for Viollet-le-Duc's plan to incorporate a multitude of figural sculptures into architecture. No other cathedral in France, especially before the destructive bombing of the First World War, had so

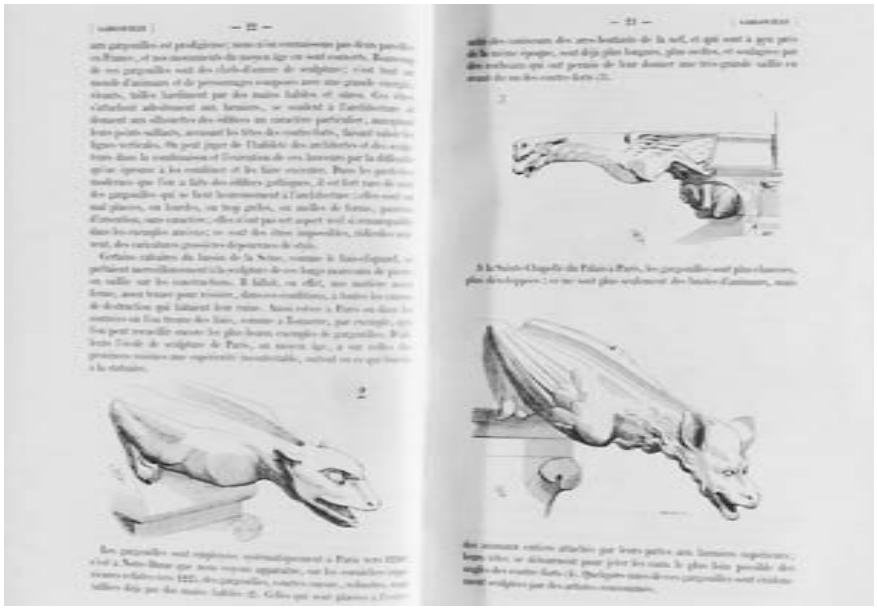
many gargoyles and grimacing faces, so many nooks and crannies where lithic creatures were lodged. Especially significant were the large eagles that were placed higher up along the roofline, visible in Le Secq's photograph. However, there is nothing in thirteenth-century architecture of the period when the towers of Notre-Dame were erected which provides any more specific parallels for Viollet-le-Duc's chimeras. Only in much later Gothic sculptures on the cathedral of Strasbourg and at the house of Jacques Coeur in Bourges is there a similar trompe l'oeil sculptural effect of figures leaning out from over a balustrade, as though looking down.[23] If all they had to go on were the tiny marks of the 1699 drawing and the imprints of claws of long-gone creatures, how did Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc arrive at the amazing cast of fifty-four chimeras we still see today? This is the question we attempt to answer in the first half of this book.

The chimeras on the balustrade cannot be studied in isolation and are intimately connected with another crucial cast of characters that the two architects re-created at Notre-Dame—the gargoyles, or drainpipes.

13. Viollet-le-Duc, drawing in pen and wash for one of the pinnacles of the towers of Notre-Dame, Paris, dated 1846. MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

Gargoyles are essential to the spectacular visual effect of Notre-Dame. Sleek stone missiles shooting out in serried rows, they help anchor the structure, their aerodynamic bodies providing a counter horizontal thrust to the upward-leaping shafts and pinnacles. But more than geometric thrusts, gargoyles are beasts of living fantasy, making stone partake of the elasticity of flesh. Poised on the precarious edge of instability, their eyes stare into infinity. But most important of all are their wide-open mouths, gaping jaws that produce the uncanny impression, from certain angles looking up at the towers, that the whole cathedral is screaming. There are hundreds of gargoyles on Notre-Dame, projecting from three different levels of the nave elevation as well as all the way around the choir. They also appear high on the corners of the towers, often as "false gargoyles"—that is, without actually serving to dispel water. An early drawing by Viollet-le-Duc, dated 1846, for a single-horned creature looking as though it is ready to spring from the corner of the tower buttress shows the architect's care in integrating the beast and the building (fig. 13). Already we can see the "type" that he will re-create in a thousand variations, a dragonish but also semihuman physiognomy, deeply faceted so as to catch the light, with a flattened nose and canine ears, a creature whose eyes are fierce with animal passion.

Both architects were careful to make the gargoyles fit the different historical phases of the construction. For example, those on the early facade and towers are shorter and have the bulky, almost canine physiognomies close to the early thirteenth-century example Viollet-le-Duc had illustrated in his *Dictionnaire* (fig. 14). Those on the nave chapels dating from later in the century and on the transepts, from about 1250–60, are more elongated and have corbels beneath them. Here some gargoyles even assume human form. From a distance the two rows of gargoyles on two levels of the south



14. Viollet-le-Duc, illustrations for the entry "Gargouille," in *Dictionnaire*, 6:22–23. (Photo: author.)

15. Viollet-le-Duc, row of gargoyles on southern side of nave, Notre-Dame, Paris. (Photo: Stuart Michaels.)

nave chapels appear uniform (fig. 15), and indeed part of their uncanny effect is this serene ordering of animality into obedient ranks of regimented monstrosity.

The originals had been removed in various stages during the Age of Reason because they were in such a ruinous state, but also because they were seen as signs of medieval irrationality. One of the first recorded acts of destruction or restoration described by Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc in their 1843 report occurred in 1725, when the Cardinal de Noailles, "a prelate . . . full of a zeal fatal to the monument, removed stone gargoyles which ornamented the buttresses and served to eject rainwater and replaced them with lead pipes."[24] Even more significant is a document of 15 June 1744 in which Nicholas Parvy, the building's inspector, decided that the "gargoyles and chimeras" of the galleries below the towers were too ruined to be restored and ordered them removed, and most of them were over the next four years.[25] Two years before the revolutionary devastation of 1789 the few last gargoyles were removed. A number of witnesses have also testified to their gradual disappearance. In 1763 one author notes as one of the "curiosities" of the church the "large number of channels and tubes in the form of animals, worked very artistically, in order to drain away the water." But in the little monograph on the cathedral by A. P. M. Gilbert published in 1811 there is no mention of gargoyles, only conventional lead drainpipes (*tuyaux de plomb*).[26] In an 1827 monograph on the cathedral, Chapuy lamented the replacement with "ignoble lead spouts of those downward gutters called *gargoyles*," because these not only served to carry away water but also decorated the corners of the edifice "in a very picturesque manner."[27] In the last major monograph published on the cathedral before its restoration, Émile Leconte's careful line drawings made in 1841 reveal the two towers cleansed of most of their figurative ornament, with the exception of one or two creatures hidden in corners that previous restorers had neglected to remove.[28] It is hard to imagine the exterior of Notre-Dame today without its little beasts, pinnacles, fleurons, and other details, but most of all gargoyle-less. But it is even more difficult to appreciate how radical the two restorers were in seeking to put back these architectural relics from a bygone age, monsters that had embodied all that was deemed barbarous and primitive in the Gothic style by champions of neoclassical decorum.

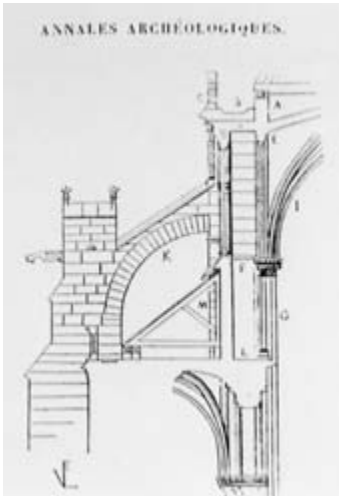
If gargoyles went against the grain of modern architectural theory at the time, they were also vilified in the popular imagination. For example, an 1841 article on the gargoyles of Barcelona Cathedral in the *Magasin pittoresque* stated that although picturesque, "today they present a great inconvenience" by drenching passersby. During rainstorms the gargoyles of Notre-Dame also proved a public nuisance, as pictured in *Le Journal pour rire* in an article entitled "Old Paris," their fantastic spouts spitting great "ogival" arches of water onto those below (fig. 16).[29]

LE JOURNAL POUR RIRE.

sons de tocsin, des hurlements de chiens affamés, des sifflets de noctambules aux agnets, des cris étouffés criant miséricorde, des gargouilles vomissant des cascades....

Passait-il par cette tortueuse rue du Coire, alors cour des Miracles, des ribauds goujats, mauvais garçons de tout pays, l'apostrophaient en toutes les langues, l'assommaient en bon français, et lui faisaient épouser une bohémienne.

Passait-il rue du Fouarre, une trappe s'ouvrait sous ses pas, il tombait dans une sorcière-boutique portant cette enseigne : *Spécialité pour les pâtés de lièvres et d'étudiants, chair fraîche à toute heure*; et on vous le hachait menu comme chair à pâté.


ANNALES ARCHÉOLOGIQUES.

16. "Gargoyles vomiting their cascades" on unfortunate medieval inhabitants of Paris. From *Le Journal pour rire*, 31 March 1855, p. 3. (Photo: author.)

17. Viollet-le-Duc, system of Gothic guttering. From *Annales archéologiques*, 3 (1845): 318. (Photo: author.)

Because they deteriorated rapidly, gargoyles were often replaced during the Middle Ages and thus became an especially contentious point for restorers. Viollet-le-Duc became their champion. He emphasized their role in the rain, but always as functioning elements in Gothic architecture. According to his 1845 article, "De la construction des édifices religieux en France," the gargoyle forms the horizontal element of a drainage system and has nothing fantastic about it (fig. 17). In this early image of Viollet-le-Duc's Gothic architectural order, in which each element is part of an integrated system, the gargoyle has a crucial place. Viollet-le-Duc went on to complain that at the Sainte-Chapelle and at Notre-Dame, "where the gargoyles have been replaced by hideous lead pipes, the damage caused by rainwater is infinitely more serious."[30] In one of his many asides directed against those artists of the Beaux-Arts school who slavishly followed only Italian models, he pointed out that in France it rains. In 1849 he and Prosper Mérimée made gargoyles "official" by recommend-

ing their use in a special publication on the restoration of diocesan buildings. They urged restorers and architects to preserve medieval systems of drainage as a matter of course.[31] Viollet-le-Duc's influence on modern architectural theory is undeniable. Yet to describe him, as one historian does, as "a visionary among the gargoyles" is to forget that, for him, these forms were not dark dragons of the medieval past, but critical components of his coherent and functional view of the Gothic.[32] Although the gargoyles had been removed in the Age of Reason, Viollet-le-Duc saw every good reason to replace them. Nothing for him was more modern, more functional, than the gargoyle.

In the entry "Restoration" in his *Dictionnaire,* Viollet-le-Duc used the example of gargoyles for the restorer's scrupulous adherence to historical changes: "In an edifice of the thirteenth century, where the water ran off by means of driptones—as in the Cathedral of Chartres, for instance—it was thought necessary during the fifteenth century to add gargoyles to the gutters, for the better regulation of the escape. These gargoyles are in a bad state and have to be replaced. Shall we, on the pretext of unity, substitute gargoyles of the thirteenth century for them? No: for we should thus destroy the traces of an interesting primitive arrangement. On the contrary, we shall persist in following the later work, adhering to its style."[33] The proliferation of gargoyles at Notre-Dame, especially on the pinnacles of the tower buttresses, is especially noticeable if one compares the 1843 plan by Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc (fig. 6) with an illustration in the *Description de Notre-Dame* published by Viollet-le-Duc in 1856 (fig. 7). Whereas the gargoyles in the original plan are restricted to the frontal axis and number only four on each tower, here they have multiplied to project from each corner angle.

Viollet-le-Duc made his most important statement on the subject in his article "Gargoyle" for the *Dictionnaire* (fig. 14), which was the first attempt anywhere to write a history of this architectural form.[34] Most important, he argues that it is in Paris, at Notre-Dame around 1225, that one sees the first truly artistic experiments with this system of water drainage. He illustrates and describes two early examples; the first (his fig. 2) is described as "short" but already carved by skillful hands, and the second is a longer gargoyle from the nave buttresses which has a carved corbel underneath it. This allowed the beast to stretch its neck out even further. He notes that thirteenth-century architects realized the importance of separating or dividing channels of water so as to run off the roofs, which meant that they multiplied the gargoyles, and "in multiplying them they could be carved more finely and thinner, and sculptors seized on these striking stones to make a decorative form on buildings."[35] He also points out that limestone from the Seine basin, "le liais cliquart," can be cut in long, thin shapes, which makes it perfectly suited for this function. So it is in Paris

18. Fragments of original gargoyles of Notre-Dame, Paris, once in the garden behind the apse. (Photo: from Bridaham.)

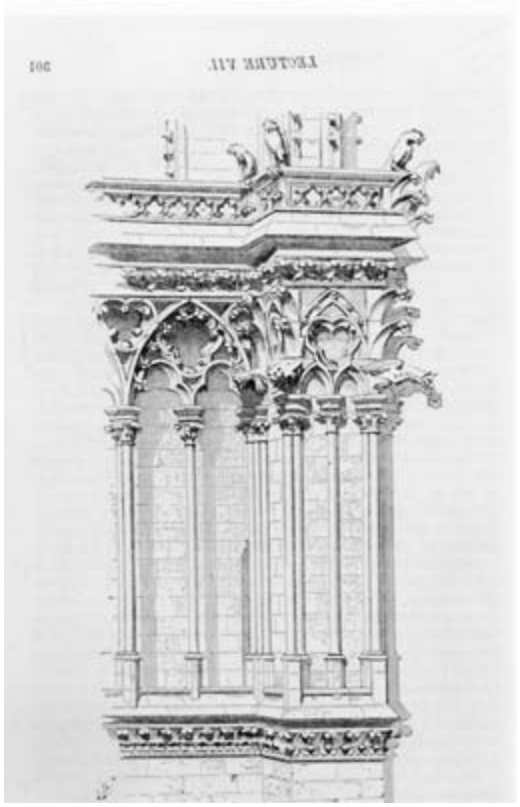
where one finds "the most beautiful examples of gargoyles." For Viollet-le-Duc the gargoyle as we know it today was a Parisian invention.

Whereas in the Middle Ages gargoyles had been signs of the spiritual control and subjugation of demonic forces, in Viollet-le-Duc's system they become signs that stave off decay, elements of salvation, not for the soul but for the building's body. They are in this sense inbuilt elements of restoration, preserving and protecting the structure. In going against the prevailing symbolist account of gargoyles as evil spirits ejected from the edifice, and seeing them as signs of order, the author was in fact closer to the medieval view of gargoyle as a force for good. Viollet-le-Duc was as scrupulous in his attempts at historical veracity when it came to gargoyles as with jamb statues. The *Journal des travaux* records that, on 30 October 1847, plaster casts were made from one of the few original gargoyles still in situ to serve as a model for the newly designed ones. The weathered husks of the few surviving gargoyles that still clung to the decaying surface of the cathedral were removed. These very damaged, discarded examples of the earliest gargoyles created at Notre-Dame were until 1898 kept in the garden at the east end of the cathedral, as recorded in old photographs (fig.18). While other replaced elements, such as parts of the central tympanum, were sent to the Louvre to be exhibited as great examples of French Gothic sculpture, these weathered, old gargoyles, considered functional and decorative, were left to rot as garden ornaments. Gargoyles would go on display in museums only much later in the century.[36]

19. Gargoyles under canopies along the nave, Notre-Dame, Paris. (Photo: Stuart Michaels.)

Viollet-le-Duc went on from making a strongly functionalist argument for gargoyles to become increasingly interested in them as artistic forms. He even found new uses for them. For example, he devised a series of pot-holding gargoyles with two reservoirs and two spouts, one coming from their mouths, another from the jugs they carried.[37] Among the most audacious of his inventions at Notre-Dame were the svelte gargoyles surmounting human or animal consoles that project at the extremities of the flying buttresses of the nave underneath the columned canopies (fig.19). Their horizontal thrust no doubt provides a nice visual counterbalance to the soaring pinnacles. But they are also totally unlike anything that was built in the thirteenth century. Peter Kurmann, discussing what he calls Viollet-le-Duc's "irony," has emphasized their "functional absurdity," combining gargoyle and canopy.[38] Richly articulated canopies possessed exclusively sacred associations and had been used by medieval architects to enclose the most dignified personages such as saints, evoking their eternal heavenly existence, their supernatural status. Gargoyles are supposed to represent the very opposite—all the body, filth, and foulness that is ejected from the edifice. So to crown them under such canopies is strange, to say the least. Was Viollet-le-Duc being ironic as Kurmann suggests, elevating his gargoyles to the status of the sacred?

Functional arguments could not be made for the restitution of the beasts of the balustrade, since these elements did not help eliminate the buildup of water. They



20. Viollet-le-Duc, illustration of a corner of the balustrade of Notre-Dame showing the relationship between chimeras and gargoyles. From *Entretiens sur l'architecture* 1863, fig. 18. (Photo: author.)

21. Viollet-le-Duc, illustration for the entry "Balustrade," in *Dictionnaire*, 1:73. (Photo: author.)

were primarily visual, and for Viollet-le-Duc they played a crucial role in his aesthetic conception of the whole facade. In the seventh lecture of his most ambitious theoretical work, *Entretiens sur l'architecture* (written between 1860 and 1863), he described the facade of Notre-Dame as a paradigm of perfection "in which the prudence of the practical builder is combined with the daring of the artist, full of power and inventive imagination."[39] The chimeras are discussed as aspects of what he regarded to be one of the greatest Gothic structures ever built. The original architect had solved the problem of "setting two isolated bodies on a solid body" by creating this zone of transition between the two levels of the facade and by having "animals sculpted at the extremity of these angles of the balustrades." A drawing shows a whole section of one corner in elevation, showing the role that the chimeras play in the elegant latticework of contrasting curves that creates the gallery (fig. 20). This design also makes clear how the vertical chimeras are integrated with the horizontal gargoyles thrusting out beneath them. A similar argument appears in the architect's article "Balustrade" in the second volume of his *Dictionnaire* where he reproduces from the balustrade of the western facade of Notre-Dame one of his favorite chimeras (no. 18; see the appendix), the dragon with bent arms and tongue (fig. 21). In his carefully measured

22. Viollet-le-Duc, "La Grande Galerie de la façade." From *Revue générale de l'architecture et des travaux publics*, 1851. (Photo: author.)

illustration and in his text Viollet-le-Duc emphasizes that both the figure of the beast and the balustrade are carved from one single block of stone. Thus, although giving the illusion of a living thing clinging to or having just landed upon the stone parapet, the creature is continuous with the architectural structure and not a decorative appendage added to it. The perky monster and the two upward-surging crockets of the corner also serve to break the horizontal monotony of the repeated open quatrefoils and the parallel mouldings of the balustrade. He argues that the chimeras provide a lightness to the upper parts of the facade as well as serving to recall "the size of the human figure and restore to the gallery the full effect of its real height."[40]

This human scale is evident in another of his drawings, reproduced in volume 9 of César Daly's *Revue générale de l'architecture et des travaux publics*, published in 1851, soon after the first of these sculptures had been placed on the western balustrade. This gives us the very first view from the standpoint of a visitor to the balustrade itself, which in subsequent decades would become such an important locus of perambulation and the projection of human desire (fig. 22).

As one looks north along the south tower's balustrade, two of the most famous chimeras, the bird devouring grapes and the tongued dragon with bent arms (nos.

18 and 19), are positioned just as they are today. But what makes this view especially interesting is not only that it shows Viollet-le-Duc's awareness of a third vantage point *among* the monsters, but also that he places a human spectator on the parapet, partly to give a sense of scale to the creatures but also to provide another visual accent. Here is a worker in a smock and casquette or cloth cap, perhaps one of the workmen. He gazes out over the cluster of houses, many of them medieval, that fill the shadowy space below. In contrast with the dark city beneath him, the worker up on the parapet can breathe fresh air and, in the light, clear atmosphere, admire the famous view. This fits with Viollet-le-Duc's views on the true audience of Gothic art that follow directly in the seventh discourse from the analysis of the front of Notre-Dame. "An age which considers art only an affair of luxury—an appanage of the higher classes, or an envelope suited only to certain public edifices—may be distinguished for good government, but it is certainly not civilized; and painful dissensions may be anticipated for it. . . . It is then important to all to concede to art the claims it makes to universal predominance; to give it its place everywhere. . . . In the thirteenth century the art invented by the secular school was essentially democratic; it was universally diffused, and the villager might be as proud of his church, or the simple knight of his manor house, as the citizen of his cathedral or the sovereign of his palace."[41] The image shows exactly this pride of the citizen in his cathedral. Yet Viollet-le-Duc does not show this male worker-citizen entering by one of the portals or attempting to decipher their intricate iconography. Rather, he shows someone looking away from the "Bible in stone" but functioning as part of its rational structure and establishing a human scale. The gargoyles and chimeras here become signs for that ideal democracy that Viollet-le-Duc saw in Gothic architecture. In this respect the scheme that the master restorer devised for the cathedral was indeed ironic in its utopian idealism, its openness to the masses, and its inversion of the monsters from margin to center. As we shall see, Viollet-le-Duc conceived a number of the chimeras in that fateful year of 1848. Their genesis was a part of the fear mingled with idealism of the February revolution—a short period when, for a secular thinker like Viollet-le-Duc, the cathedral could become what he described as "a sort of *liberty of the press*, an outlet for minds ready to react against abuses of the feudal state."[42] Paradoxically, by the time the chimeras were finished and installed in 1855–56, they loomed over a reactionary regime in which freedom of the press had been curtailed. For Viollet-le-Duc the only liberty untainted by the horrors of these years was his own imagination. The question he asks in the *Entretiens sur l'architecture*, in his homage to the architect of the west facade of Notre-Dame, an "artist full of power and inventive imagination," is answered in his own restoration of that structure: "Whence, we may ask, did the artists of that time acquire all these excellences if not from their own imaginative faculty?"[43]

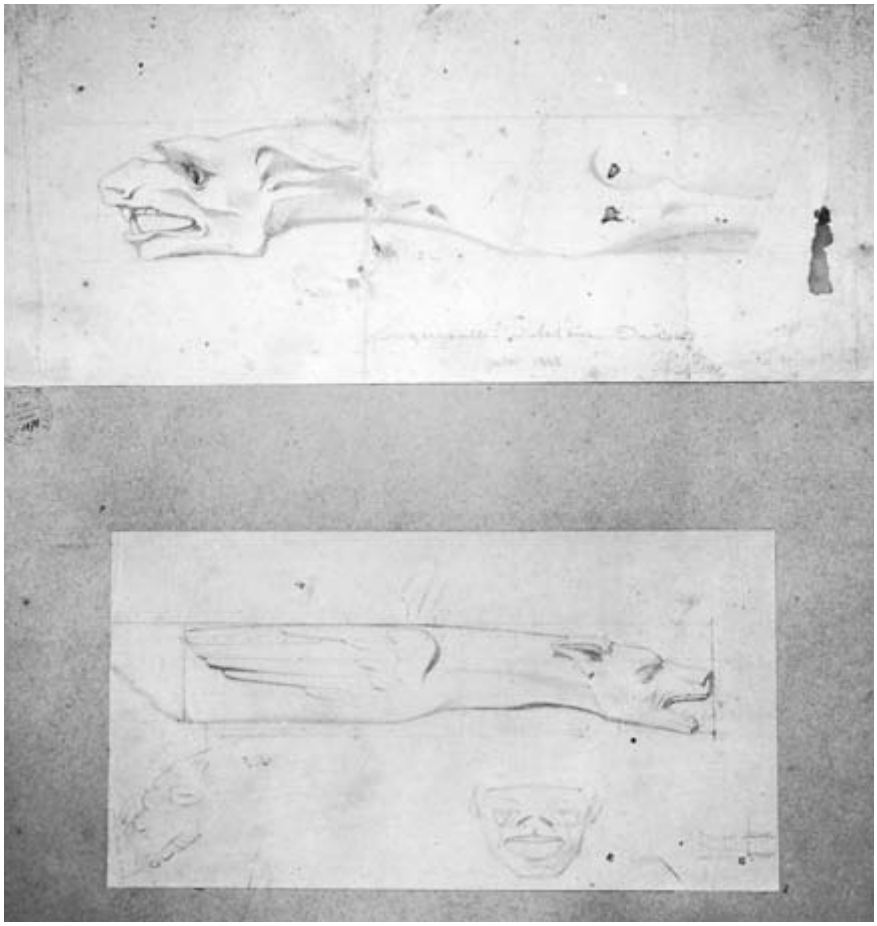
II · *Drawings by Viollet-le-Duc and Lassus*

Why rob me of my centaur? What will the man of science have gained when he has proved to me that I am taking chimeras for realities?

VIOLLET-LE-DUC, *Lectures on Architecture* [44]

The practice of drawing was fundamental to Viollet-le-Duc's artistic imagination. In 1834, at age twenty, while employed in an architect's office, he was also teaching drawing at the École de dessin de Paris. From his early travel sketches in Italy to his superbly detailed watercolor designs for later projects like the chateau at Pierrefonds, we know that drawing was his preferred mode of thought, a form of visual contemplation. In his last book, a novel about a peasant boy learning to draw under the tutelage of a kindly engineer, *Histoire d'un dessinateur* (1879), the practice functions as a salvific moral force, just as it did for the English critic John Ruskin. Extant drawings by Viollet-le-Duc reveal not only a superb handling of light and shade but also an anatomical excavation of space, as though the building were an organic living body—very different from the traditional architectural drawings seen in ground plan and elevation as taught at his nemesis, the École des beaux-arts. Drawing was a means not only of creation but also, in the realm of restoration, a form of surveillance and control. It is remarkable that even for the smallest elements of Notre-Dame, Viollet-le-Duc assumed total control *through* drawings. One day before the law passed that finally provided funds for the restoration to begin on 19 July 1845, Viollet-le-Duc drew up plans for reorganizing the agency that would oversee the restoration. This involved two inspectors below himself and Lassus as the two leading architects, whose job was not only to oversee work on the site but also to prepare detailed drawings. However, with the exception of a few drawings by Lassus and those later executed by sculptors like Geoffroy-Dechaume, it seems that Viollet-le-Duc took responsibility for most of the project drawings.

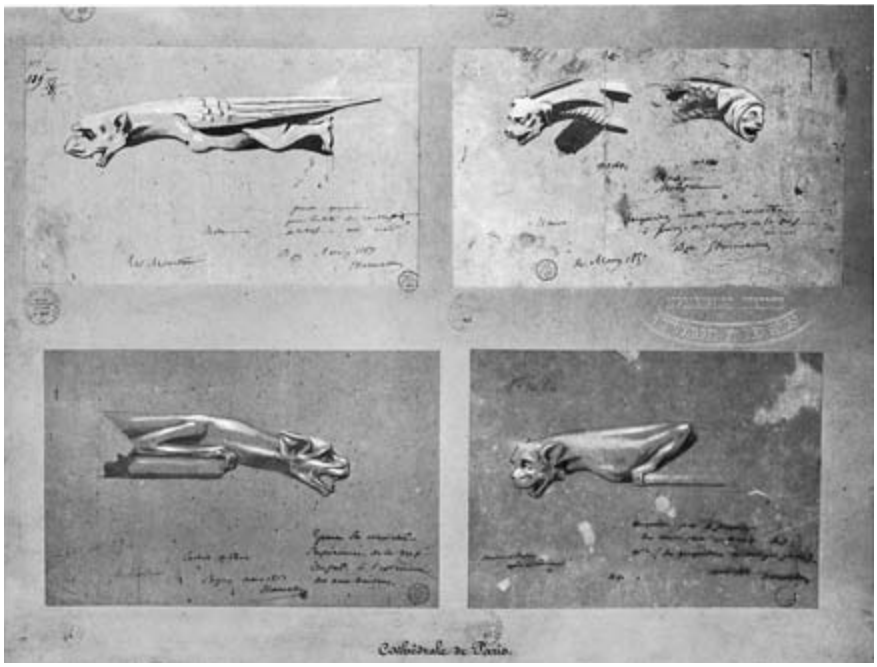
It was only in the spring of 1847, after a contract had gone out to bid for masonry, timber, and metalwork that five specific sculptors were assigned various ornamental and figural tasks. This number eventually grew to eleven workshops of "sculpteurs ornemanistes" who were separate from the creators of life-size statues for the portals. The drawings that Viollet-le-Duc executed for these men are of various sizes and on different formats according to their intended use. These are blueprints in the true sense, proving exact guidelines. Every chisel mark had to be transcribed from paper onto stone, especially with the intricately stretched forms of the "grandes gargouilles." Such working drawings were easily lost or retained by the sculptors after they had used them. The fact that a drawing of a gargoyle for the north side of



23. Viollet-le-Duc, drawings in graphite and wash for two "grandes gargoyles de la tour du sud," July 1848. MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

the nave bears the inscription "This drawing to be returned after completion" suggests that this did not always happen.

Looking at the designs made for the hundreds of gargoyles during this first phase of the campaign (1847–50), we see they are in soft lead point, further defined by pale ink washes to bring out the subtle play of shadows (fig. 23). They often bear, in the architect's own handwriting, an indication of placement along with a scribbled signature and date. The creatures' limbs or wings are usually held tight against their flanks to create a sleek, streamlined effect; even their ears are pulled back to follow the thrust of their forms. Each has a unique facial expression and character, its muzzle sometimes isolated in a separate sketch viewed from the front to give the sculptor



24. Viollet-le-Duc, four drawings in graphite and wash heightened in white, for gargoyles for the nave and choir of Notre-Dame, Paris, 1853–57. MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

more of a guide to its three-dimensional presence as a living animal.

A series of drawings from the second phase of restoration, after work had ceased for two years, is quite different (fig. 24). Drawings from this period (1853–57) exhibit a tighter control and are more standardized in format. They also utilize a more uniform technique of gouache washes, often heightened with white on neutral darkish paper, which made their conversion into stone even easier. Other ornamental sculptors, in addition to Victor Pyanet, the sculptor of the chimeras, produced these gargoyle designs: Pierre Martrou carved most of the nave sculptures, and the Marchant brothers or Thiébault created those for the choir. The architect's written specifications are also more elaborate at this stage. In addition to the artist's signature, date, and location, nearly all include Viollet-le-Duc's small stamp and the name of the assigned sculptor as well as the phrase "Bon pour exécution," meaning that the master had given the design his final approval. All this ensured that even in this highly efficient production line of monstrosity, no two gargoyles would be identical. Their production became as streamlined as the gargoyle itself.

This same system of preparatory drawings was used for the sculptures that Viollet-le-Duc designed for the balustrade. These are referred to most often as

"bêtes," or beasts, in the written restoration accounts and in a small group of superb drawings that survive from his hand. In one document, however, a *Mémoire de travaux de sculpture* for 1849, they are referred to for the first time using another term—as "les grandes bêtes ou Chimères."[45] In the eighteenth-century *Encyclopédie* "la chimère" is described as a "fabulous monster which, according to the poets, had the head and hindquarters of a lion, the body of a goat, and the neck of a serpent."[46] The description is duplicated in any number of nineteenth-century architectural dictionaries, such as that of Daniel Ramée.[47] The word "chimère" had come to be associated with illusion itself, a delusory figment of the imagination. In a celebrated chapter of his *Genius of Christianity* ("La Vague des passions") Chateaubriand had sought to give to the malady of modern estrangement Christian and medieval origins. Formerly those estranged from their fellow men took refuge in monasteries, but now that this resource failed them they were left in the world without being of it, and so "they become prey of a thousand chimeras."[48] In the first of his *Lectures on Architecture*, written before 1857, Viollet-le-Duc himself makes important reference to the mythological chimera in his discussion of the origins of art: "All nations have begun by making monstrosities before attempting to imitate nature." He describes how, in creating the gorgon's head, the Greeks "eventually succeeded in embodying for the multitude the idea of being malevolent and yet not hideous." He goes on to argue that

> imagination would produce only vague and shapeless fancies if man did not possess a regulator within, obliging him to give his fancies the semblance of reality. This regulator is his reason. . . . This natural faculty enables him to see that the farther the creations of his imagination are removed from the reality of nature, the more necessary it becomes to give cohesion and harmonious form to the material combination destined to make those creations intelligible. Imagination conceives a centaur—i.e., an impossible being, unlike anything that nature has ever produced—an animal with four feet and two arms, two pairs of lungs, two hearts, two livers and two stomachs, and so on. A red Indian may conceive such an absurdity; but only a Greek would be capable of giving—with the aid of the regulative faculty within—a form of apparent reality to this impossible being. . . . He joins the abdomen of the man to the breast of the quadruped with such perfect address that the most experienced critic would imagine he was contemplating a correct and delicate study from nature. The impossible becomes so like reality that even now we think of the centaur as living and moving, as well known to us as the dog or the cat.[49]

We tend to think of Viollet-le-Duc as the Georges Cuvier of architecture, basing

his own theory and practice on the paleontological reconstruction of the whole from the fragment, but in this remarkable passage he is critical of the scientific tradition. "The physiologist—Cuvier in hand—comes and proves that this creature, which you know as well as if you had seen it running in the woods, could never have existed—that scientifically, it is a chimera—that it could neither walk nor digest—that its two pairs of lungs and its two hearts are the most ridiculous of suppositions."[50] In a brilliant bit of rhetoric Viollet-le-Duc goes on to show how part of the success of art is making the unreal real: "The sculptor who created the centaur succeeded in giving his fiction an air of reality by attentively studying the mechanism and the minute details of actual creation. It was through his exceedingly close and delicate observation of nature that the sculptor obtained for his secondary creation recognition by all. . . . But are we to suppose that such creations belong only to primitive culture? Does not art exercise its functions in our day in giving verisimilitude to fictions? And does it not always proceed in the same manner?"[51]

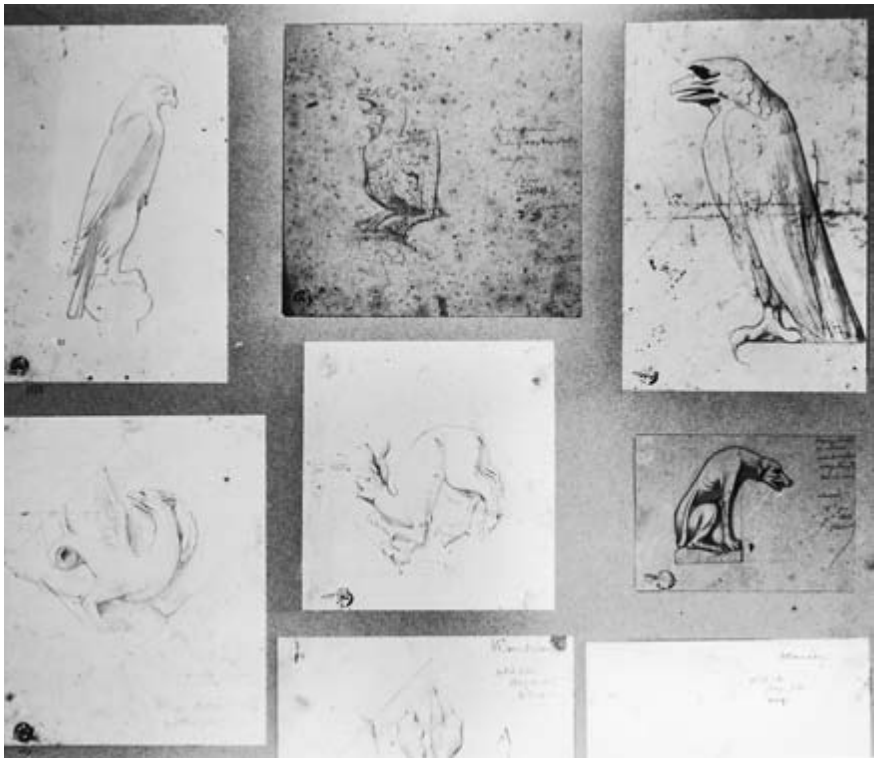
With these words Viollet-le-Duc was responding to those critics who were already drawing attention to the fanciful creations on the cathedral as excessive. The Beaux-Arts-trained sculptor Antoine Étex described what he saw in 1855 as "monsters, spikes, gargoyles, all this grotesque horde [that] makes faces at me . . . a carnivalesque charivari making an infernal din in the ears of pure and chaste harmony."[52] And in 1861 even Viollet-le-Duc's friend Ferdinand de Guilhermy wrote negatively about the restoration: "For our part, we are not in favor of comprehensive restorations which extend to all sections of the building and whose most certain result will be to create doubt as to the authenticity of that which has escaped restoration, as well as questioning that which has been restored."[53] When in his *Lectures* Viollet-le-Duc asked the rhetorical question "Why rob me of my centaur?" he might have been describing the very creatures he had created in stone, whose veracity was based not upon any archaeological evidence or historical truth but on the architect's belief in his own powers of imagination, based upon the careful combination of fantasy with a minute observation of reality.

Seven of Viollet-le-Duc's drawings for the chimeras are preserved in the Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine in Paris.[54] The earliest of these is a signed ink and wash design dated July 1848 labeled "Large sparrow for the corner of the balustrade of the galerie du jour" (fig. 25, *bottom middle*). This fits exactly with an entry in the *Journal des travaux* on 28 July of the same year describing a "moineau de la balustrade," and on 21 August 1848 there is another mention of the actual carving of plural "moineaux pour les angles des balustrades." This shows that only weeks after he conceived it, Viollet-le-Duc's great bird was being blocked out in stone. Deep dark eye sockets and beak give it a dragonish snout despite its beautifully articulated

25. Viollet-le-Duc, drawings for various sculptures at Notre-Dame, Paris, including the great sparrow (no. 16; *bottom middle*), an eagle (*top left*), and a dragon-bird (no. 8; *top right*). MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

feathers, making it a perfect example of the mingling of fantasy and observation that the artist describes in his later writings. There is a second drawing very close to this one (fig. 26, *top right*). Both great sparrows were placed prominently on the west facade (nos. 11 and 16). Both are similar in technique to another drawing created by Viollet-le-Duc in 1848 for the statue of Christ of the central trumeau, later executed by Geoffoy-Dechaume. The difference, however, is that whereas the drawing for Christ is based closely on two great Gothic models, the statues of Christ at Amiens and at Chartres cathedrals, this bird is like nothing in medieval art. Villard de Honnecourt's thirteenth-century sketchbook contains drawings of birds, but these are linear outlines, lacking the uncanny humanity of Viollet-le-Duc's splendid, sneering sparrow.

Another drawing dated 1849 is a soft pencil sketch of a fatter, smaller-winged dragon-bird with a beak-shaped snout wide open, the very first chimera in my num-



26. Viollet-le-Duc, drawings for various sculptures at Notre-Dame, Paris, including the second sparrow (no. 11; *top right*) and a bird with teeth (no. 1; *top middle*). MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

bering, but clearly not the first to be designed (fig. 26, *top middle*). This differs from the previous drawing in that it is rendered less as a profile and more from a three-quarter angle, which makes its spatial position more evident. This drawing, like most of the others for the chimeras, visually defines the creature's placement on the balustrade, on either an inner or an outer corner of the four projecting corner buttresses of the towers. Details of how the feet are attached to the horizontal surface are important, because the chimeras were not carved as separate statues but as integral to the whole block that included the horizontal, pierced balustrade.

Another superb drawing of November of the same year depicts a dragonish bird with sharp ears, labeled "bête saillaint de long de balustrade." Even though it appears less finished, it is signed "bon pour exécution. Viollet le Duc." It also bears his stamp (fig. 25, *top right*). With just a few sweeping lines of the pencil the artist has indicated a complete skeletal structure for this sharp, screeching bird chimera (no. 8).

The fifth drawing in this group, dated June 1850, is a variation on the same type of

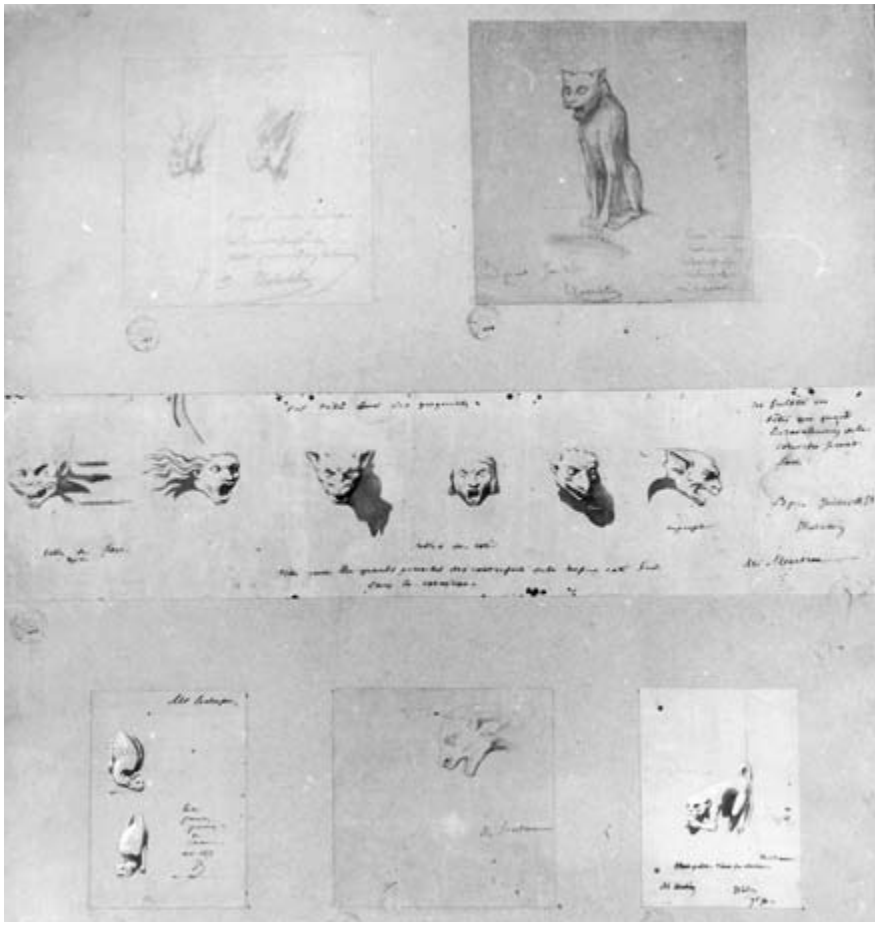
27. Viollet-le-Duc, drawing in graphite dated June 1850 for a dragon-bird (no. 8). MAP. (Photo: Patrick Cadet.)

28. Viollet-le-Duc, chimera from the "angle du galerie de jour, façade principale." From *Encyclopédie d'architecture*. (Photo: author.)

29. Dragon-bird with beard (no. 4), Notre-Dame, Paris. MAP. (Photo: Jannie Mayer.)

reptilian bird (no. 4), but on darker paper with a slightly more mammalian snout (fig. 27). The spontaneity of these pencil sketches is especially evident when we compare them with the more linear illustrations that are so well known from Viollet-le-Duc's *Dictionnaire* or the *Encyclopédie d'architecture* (fig. 28). Even Claude Sauvageot in his early study of Viollet-le-Duc's drawings remarked on the difference between the architect's original drawings and their later simplification in wood engravings.[55] What we must remember is that for the sculptors working under Viollet-le-Duc at Notre-Dame, the blueprints came in the form of these subtle and spontaneous sketches. These are what they had to try to turn into stone. The closeness of the drawing to the final executed statue is remarkable (fig. 29). The carver has followed every scaly feather and shadowy undulation of the eye socket in the drawing. The only problem was that the sculptor, having to deal with gravity, gave the dragon-bird a beard connecting its head to its chest to give it a little more support.

That the restoration work came to a halt for nearly two years on 30 April 1850 has important repercussions for the chimeras, dividing their creation into two distinct campaigns. The sixth of these drawings is a beautifully naturalistic rendition of a cat sitting erect, its mouth a meowing snarl, dated June 1850 (fig. 30). However, this



30. Viollet-le-Duc, drawings in graphite and wash for various sculptures at Notre-Dame, Paris, including the cat (no. 29; *top right*). MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

sculpture (no. 29) could not have been executed and put in place along with the other creatures of the south tower until the restoration work started again two years later.

The final and probably latest drawing in this group from the Médiathéque de l'architecture et du patrimoine is a more systematic study for an eagle on the grand balustrade of the great gallery without any inscription or signature (fig. 26, *top left*). It shows an eagle in profile and is one of the more standardized designs, similar to the later gargoyle drawings, dated 1856–57. Every one of the fifty-four beasts must have once had such an elaborate preparatory drawing, though only seven (for six chimeras) have been published until now. As early as 1880 Sauvageot noted that there must be many more of Viollet-le-Duc's working drawings extant than were then known

in public collections, because the master's drawings were often zealously retained as trophies by those sculptors working under him, even though they were, as we have already indicated, meant to be returned.[56]

A group of fourteen drawings for the chimeras signed by Viollet-le-Duc can be added to this list; they are in a private collection and are published here for the first time. They are among more than thirty drawings for the Notre-Dame project which came into the possession of an architect around 1900 when he was a student at the École des beaux-arts. Apparently they were given to him by an elderly lady who said she was the daughter of one of the sculptors employed by Viollet-le-Duc at Notre-Dame. The name inscribed on them again and again is Pyanet; he, as we shall see, was the main carver of the chimeras.

Five of the drawings for the chimeras in this sculptor's album (as I shall call it) are in the softer lead-point-and-wash style of 1848–49. Inscriptions also indicate that some of these drawings were among the first chimeras to be designed—those for the most visible, western facade. The earliest, dated August 1848, is Viollet-le-Duc's remarkably expressive design for the gloating, one-horned figure on the left of the south tower (no. 17; fig. 31). As a carving this figure was placed next to the sparrow, for which we saw the very earliest dated drawing of July of the same year (fig. 32). This suggests that the chimeras were conceived from the beginning as wide-eyed, staring creatures, both demonic and animal, creatures more conscious and attentive than any gargoyle. The demon's position on a projecting rather than an inner corner is indicated both in the drawing itself and in Viollet-le-Duc's inscription: "Angle saillans de la balustrade." Unusually, he did not mark this drawing as authorized for execution. He did, however, approve the next extant design in this collection, the bird with the open beak dated October 1849 (no. 20; fig. 33). On his sketchier drawing for the crouching dog dated November 1849 (no. 23; fig. 34) he crossed out the original "saillans" and replaced it with "rentrant," perhaps when he decided to place the statue on an inner angle of the west facade (fig. 35). Another drawing of this first group (fig. 36) is for an eagle with strange, catlike ears and snout that became the last chimera on the western part of the balustrade (no. 26).

Some of these early drawings have letters, and others also have numbers, suggesting that by November 1849 the architect had conceived of a plan for the placement of all the chimeras. For example, the next month he made another drawing marked with a "T," indicating that this sculpture should be placed prominently on the west facade. This is one of the most interesting and unusual of the chimeras—the horned demon squashing the toad, with its scowling brow and unearthly anger (fig. 37). Perhaps Viollet-le-Duc was not as pleased with the final sculpture as he was with the others, since it does not appear in the prominent location marked on the drawing. Instead,

31. Viollet-le-Duc, graphite and wash drawing for a horned goat-demon (no. 17). Signed "Angle saillans de la balustrade de la Grande Galerie sur les contreforts Aout 1848. Viollet-le-Duc." 27 × 31 cm. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

32. Sparrow and goat-demon chimeras, 1880s. Albumen print from glass negative. MAP. (Photo: author.)

33. Viollet-le-Duc, bird with open beak (no. 20). Graphite, pen, and wash drawing. Signed "Angle rentrons de la balustrade. Bon pour exécution. Octobre 1849 Viollet le Duc. Marquée 'S.' (petit 21 a gauche)." 25 × 18.4 cm. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

34. Viollet-le-Duc, crouching dog with grapes (no. 23). Graphite, pen, and wash drawing. Signed "Angle saillant [crossed-out] rentrons de la balustrade de la grande galerie a jour façade. Bon pour exécution. Novembre 1849. Viollet-le-Duc." Marked with a "V." 27 × 23.5 cm. Private collection (Photo: author.)

35. Crouching dog with grapes (no. 23). (Photo: CNMHS.)

36. Viollet-le-Duc, bird with a sad expression (no. 26). Graphite, pen, and wash drawing. Signed "Angle saillant (rentrons du balustrade de la grande galerie du tour façade. Bon pour exécution. Decembre 1849. Viollet-le-Duc." 18.6 × 17.7 cm. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

37. Viollet-le-Duc, horned demon squashing a toad (no. 54). Graphite, pen, and wash drawing. Signed "Bête d'angle de la balustrade de la grande galerie du tour façade. Octobre 1849. Bon pour exécution. Decembre 1849. Viollet-le-Duc." Marked with a "T." (marked "4" on the left). 26.2 × 22.8 cm. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

it was placed rather out of the way, on the back, eastern-facing corner of the north tower (no. 54). Another explanation for its relocation may be, as we shall see shortly, that it was actually designed not by Viollet-le-Duc but by his colleague Lassus.

A group of nine superb drawings in this album are dated 1854. All are in the later, more fluid gouache technique heightened with white and are for the group of chimeras on the inner and eastern-facing sides of the tower balustrade. They are the bear (fig. 38), the cormorant (no. 45; fig. 39), the boar (no. 47; fig. 40), the three-headed dog (no. 48; fig. 41), the little elephant (no. 41; fig. 42), which also has an indication of its measurements and the type of stone to be used, and the bull (fig. 43). The next two, the griffin (no. 46; fig. 44) and the basilisk (no. 44; fig. 45), were drawn on the same day, 16 September, and the horse-faced creature five days later (no. 50; fig. 46). The griffin—striking in its modulated texture created out of white highlights—is especially important, since this is the one chimera whose statue is no longer extant; having already lost its head in photographs of the 1890s, it has now totally disappeared. The bear grabbing its paw is a wonderful design on paper, but it may have been too complicated to render in stone (fig. 38). The bear cub ultimately carved (no. 43) is much simpler. This suggests that the architects were able to change their conception of the chimeras as the project progressed. One of the most important of these transformations is suggested by the chronology of these drawings. The earlier series of creatures for the facade is mostly of hybrid birds, demonic and terrifying creatures with wings, which even grace the shoulders of the famous pensive demon (no. 6). This emphasis changed in 1854, when the architects must have decided to populate the balustrade with more earthbound animals like elephants and bears. Four of these drawings are inscribed in Viollet-le-Duc's unmistakable handwriting with the name of the sculptor who was to carve them, "M. Pyanet." In the *Journal des travaux* for 19 April 1853 we read that "Monsieur Pyanet received drawings for two of the chimeras numbered 7 and 8," and on 27 February 1854 he received another numbered series of

38. Viollet-le-Duc, bear holding its foot (no. 43). Graphite and wash drawing with gouache on beige paper with white highlights. Signed "M. Pyanet. Bête de la grande balustrade revers de la tour nord. Bon pour exécution. Viollet-le-Duc. Juillet 1854." 20.1 × 23 cm. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

39. Viollet-le-Duc, cormorant (no. 45). Graphite and wash drawing with gouache drawing on beige paper. Signed "Notre Dame. Tour nord bêtes de la balustrade de la grande galerie. Bon pour exécution. Viollet-le-Duc. Juillet 54." 22.5 × 18 cm. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

40. Viollet-le-Duc, boar (no. 47). Graphite and wash drawing with gouache on beige paper. Signed "Notre Dame. Bête pour la grande balustrade de la tour nord. Bon pour exécution. Septembre 1854. Viollet-le-Duc." 22.3 × 17 cm. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

41. Viollet-le-Duc, Cerberus (no. 48). Graphite and wash drawing with gouache on beige paper. Signed "Notre-Dame. Grandes bêtes pour la grande balustrade de la tour nord. Bon pour exécution. Septembre 1854. M. Pyanet. Viollet-le-Duc." 22.3 × 17 cm. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

42. Viollet-le-Duc, elephant (no. 41). Graphite and wash drawing with gouache on beige paper. Signed "M. Pyanet. Bête pour la grande balustrade de la tour du nord. Celle dans la pierre de L. . . . Bon pour exécution. Septembre 1854 Viollet-le-Duc." "No. 37" in pencil at top (small "37" at left). 20.6 × 20.7 cm. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

43. Viollet-le-Duc, bull (no. 49). Graphite and wash with gouache drawing on beige paper. Signed "Bête pour la grande balustrade de la tour du nord. Bon pour exécution. Septembre 1854. Viollet-le-Duc." 20.1 × 17.1 cm. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

44. Viollet-le-Duc, griffin (no. 46). Graphite and wash drawing with gouache on beige paper. Signed "Pour la balustrade de la tour du nord. Bon pour exécution. Viollet-le-Duc. 16 Septembre 1854." 21.0 × 15.5 cm. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

45. Viollet-le-Duc, basilisk (no. 44). Graphite and wash drawing with gouache on beige paper. Signed "M. Pyanet. Pour de la balustrade de la tour nord. Bon pour exécution. Viollet-le-Duc 16 Septembre 1854." 29.7 × 22.0. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

46. Viollet-le-Duc, horse-headed beast with bird (no. 50). Graphite and wash drawing with gouache on beige paper. Signed "Bête de la balustrade de la tour nord. Cathédrale de Paris. Bon pour exécution. Viollet-le-Duc. 21 Septembre 1854." 19.8 × 17 cm. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

"dossiers d'exécution." That these drawings were once in the hands of Victor Pyanet himself, whose role shall be discussed in the next section, makes them especially important new evidence for the restoration of Notre-Dame.

But perhaps the most significant discovery in this album of drawings centers on the level of involvement of the other architect—Jean-Baptiste Lassus—who, it seems, contributed specific designs for sculptures during the first phase of the restoration. As Jean-Michel Leniaud has shown, Lassus's reputation has always been overshadowed by that of his younger contemporary, not only because Lassus died prematurely but also because most of his drawings were lost when the Hôtel de Ville was destroyed by fire during the Commune in 1871.[57] According to contemporary accounts, Lassus was just as avid a draftsman as Viollet-le-Duc. His interest in medieval drawings is clearly indicated by the facsimile of the famous thirteenth-century sketchbook of Villard de Honnecourt that he published in 1858.[58] Yet only one of the four hundred drawings for Notre-Dame conserved in the Centre de recherches sur les monuments historiques is signed by Lassus, making it hard to judge his involvement in the day-to-day workings of the chantier.[59] A page of pen drawings for consoles showing human heads dated 1848 suggests that, compared with his younger colleague, Lassus had less graphic flair and a poorly developed understanding of medieval forms. The magnificently malefic gargoyles drawn by Viollet-le-Duc seem virtually to scream, whereas the open mouth of a bearded male head drawn by Lassus seems mute.[60]

All this is contradicted, however, by a number of drawings signed by Lassus and

47. Jean-Baptiste Lassus, gargoyle. Graphite drawing on white paper. Signed "Du tête des contreforts de la façade Lassus." Private collection. (Photo: author.)

48. Jean-Baptiste Lassus, head of a devil with one horn. Graphite drawing on white paper. Signed "Tête d'angle du contreforts de la façade 23 Septembre 1848." Private collection. (Photo: author.)

49. Viollet-le-Duc, unicorn demon (no.21). From *Encyclopédie d'architecture*. (Photo: author.)

50. Jean-Baptiste Lassus, demon with three horns, design for a chimera. Graphite on white paper. Signed "Tour du nord. Motif de l'angle rentrant. Lassus." Private collection. (Photo: author.)

51. Jean-Baptiste Lassus, imp-demon squashing toad, design for a chimera. Graphite on white-grey paper. Signed "Tour du Nord. Motif d'angle rentrant. Decembre 1848." Private collection. (Photo: author.)

52. Viollet-le-Duc, Demon squashing toad (no. 54). (Photo: author.)

preserved in this newly found album. In addition to some vivid designs for short gargoyles for the west facade (fig. 47), there are drawings for three demonic figures. The first, for one of the hideous heads projecting from the tower buttresses, is signed and dated 23 September 1848 (fig. 48). Although drawn in Lassus's typically tentative and linear manner, it exhibits a superb feeling for the grotesque. This single-horned scowling demon bears some resemblance to the one-horned chimera at the corner of the south tower with its long ears (no. 21). Viollet-le-Duc's signed and authorized drawing for this chimera is lost but is recorded in one of the engravings of the *Encyclopédie* (fig. 49). The other two are clearly designs for chimeras. One shows a demon with three horns grasping the balustrade and is marked "North tower, motif for the projecting corner" (fig. 50). A closely related pencil sketch, a larger drawing on grey-white paper, shows a wonderfully mischievous, almost infantile demon smiling at us as he presses his hands down upon a toad with a toothy grin (fig. 51). It is dated December 1848 and marked for the inner angle of the north tower. Typical of Lassus in its flat, frontal viewpoint, it is clearly related to the chimera of the north tower balustrade (no. 54), for which we also have the drawing by Viollet-le-Duc dated the next year in the same album (fig. 37). Viollet-le-Duc must have been thinking of this earlier design when he made his own version of the subject and authorized its execution. Most remarkable of all, the sculpture in situ bears a closer resemblance to the bulbous-headed, unearthly imp created by Lassus than to the one with sleeker reptilian features drawn by Viollet-le-Duc (fig. 52). If Lassus created his own chimera, it is here.

So Lassus was not always the staid senior partner who deferred to his younger associate's romantic flights of fancy.[61] These drawings and others in the album show that Lassus actually had a more romantic vision of the Middle Ages than did his more rational colleague. He was known for his fiery temperament and sometimes earthy Gallic wit—a humorous side on show in his ugly, cross-eyed, staring faces, some of which still stare out from the cathedral towers (fig. 53). But Lassus could also appreciate the mystical side of the Gothic, which, for him, was not simply an architectural style but a mode of feeling. As a devout Catholic, Lassus would have perceived the demonic as more real and therefore more vulnerable to ridicule than would a secular liberal like Viollet-le-Duc, whose chimeras were fictions—intellectually sophisticated models for art-making itself. In this sense we can argue that Lassus was closer to the "spirit" of the medieval artist, who, in order not to be unnerved by the evil eyes of the devils he was called upon to carve, often ridiculed them. In one of his publications he described how on the walls of Gothic churches there also reigns something cold "de la tristesse et de la mort."[62] This darker Gothic demonic aspect also emerges in these drawings, a vision that was perhaps even too radical for Viollet-le-Duc, who

53. Jean-Baptiste Lassus, grotesque heads on the pinnacles of the south tower butresses. (Photo: author.)

clearly vetoed them in favor of a frankly zoological cast of creatures, especially during the second campaign, when the chimeras more often take the form of "normal" animals. If it was Lassus who had been the mastermind of the demonic Gothic, the slightly older architect influenced the younger in one other important respect. Is not the greatest monster of all, the melancholy demon (no. 6) so etched in our minds as the brainchild of Viollet-le-Duc, closer to these multihorned, scowling devils drawn by Lassus? As a signed drawing for the vampire of Notre-Dame has yet to come to light, we cannot be sure who designed it. Because of its position on the west facade and the visual evidence of its appearance in an 1850 print by Charles Méryon, *Le Petit Pont*, we know that the melancholy demon was among the earliest chimeras drawn, carved, and installed.

54. Unknown artist [Victor Pyanet?], melancholy demon (no. 6). Graphite on yellow tracing paper. Private collection. (Photo: author.)

There is one last tantalizing mystery among the many treasures in the sculptor's album. Solange Michon has recently noted that to date "no trace of the original drawing by Viollet-le-Duc for the Stryge" has come to light.[63] There is, however, a drawing in this newly discovered album that shows the pensive demon on the projecting corner of the balustrade next to the open-mouthed eagle, which is exactly this—a "trace" of the original (fig. 54). He appears on one of six drawings on yellow tracing paper which are clearly not by Viollet-le-Duc and are more rudimentary outline tracings of his designs. One, for example, is a direct tracing of the drawing in the album of the demon squashing a toad, but others show designs which are no longer extant. They are not in the linear and detailed style of Émile Boeswillwald, who is the third artist represented in this album and who was involved in the chantier of Notre-Dame as its "sous-inspecteur conducteur" up until 1852. They are sketchier and I believe may have been made by Pyanet himself as records of drawings that came through his hands. Traced directly from Viollet-le-Duc's lost original design, the image of the demon is a faint version of the master's blueprint and is important in that it is the earliest of the many thousands of copies made of this, the most memorable personal-

55. The pensive demon (no. 6). MAP. (Photo: Jannie Mayer.)

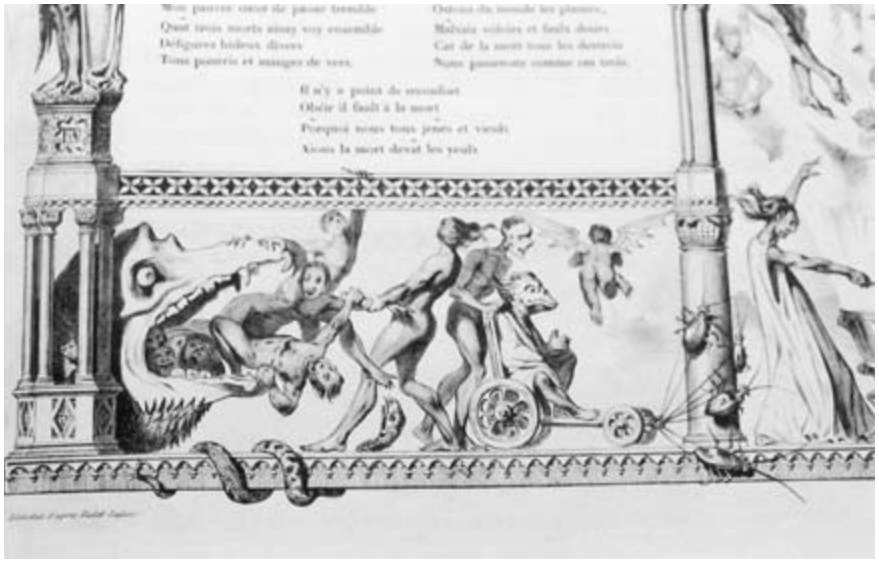
ity among the chimeras. Most important of all, however, this demon "after Viollet-le-Duc" proves that the architect conceived his greatest creature not in profile, as he would appear so often in subsequent photographs, but in three-quarter view. The pensive being is brilliantly three-dimensional, his wings and his arms creating two sides of a great curving oval that unites around the head, which rests just above and to the left of the center of the page. He is a creature of the corner, a coming together of two axes, the most perfectly designed of all the chimeras (fig. 55). But from the beginning this chimera is different. The other beasts are all in a frenzy, violently grabbing their prey, screaming, inhabiting their animality. But the melancholy demon is calm, languid even, his eyes unfixed, his pose inscrutably intense, not unlike his three-horned brother drawn by Lassus. Perhaps as occurred with the demon squashing a toad, an original idea by Lassus was refined and completed by Viollet-le-Duc, making the greatest of all the monsters of Notre-Dame a product of two minds. Like so many Mona Lisa–like images that have become ingrained in our minds through repetition, so hard to see afresh, the melancholy demon in this—the earliest evidence we have of its creation—is already a copy.

III · *Viollet-le-Duc's Anti-iconographic Imagination*

> The monster is paradoxically—despite the marginal position it occupies and although it represents at once both the impossible and the forbidden—a principle of intelligibility.
>
> MICHEL FOUCAULT, *Les Anormaux*[64]

Although the chimeras in these drawings seem to have surged fully formed from the minds of Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc, they were not without antecedent. Even a seemingly unique creation like the pensive demon has a complex modern and medieval genealogy, which will be explored later.[65] But first it is important to establish the essential modernity of both restorers. Both had been formed by the romantic generation of the 1830s. A crucial stage in the formation of Viollet-le-Duc's graphic imagination was his early work on one of the most influential publications of the French Gothic revival, the *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France*. This work was conceived by the romantic writers Charles Nodier and Baron Isidore-Justin-Séverin Taylor, and Viollet-le-Duc had promised to contribute 249 drawings between 1837 and 1844.

Fantasy groupings, collages of different objects, even from different periods, are brought together in Viollet-le-Duc's drawings to create borders that are nothing



56. Viollet-le-Duc, marginal design as printed in Baron Taylor's *Les Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France*, vol. 1 (Picardie, 1835), p. 39. (Photo: author.)

57. Viollet-le-Duc, marginal design for the Feast of Fools as printed in Baron Taylor's *La Fête fous à Ham*, vol. 1 (Picardie, 1842). (Photo: author.)

like the margins of medieval books but that are instead startling displays of medievalizing mania. Along with architectural designs featuring corpses rotting on city gates, half-timbered houses, and brilliant "troubador"-style figure compositions, the young architect also demonstrates mastery of true Renaissance "grotesque" decorative forms. Viollet-le-Duc's griffins and eagles, based on Italian models that were themselves based on ancient prototypes, undoubtedly influenced his conception of the chimeras, especially their Herculean muscularity, which seems so unmedieval. In one fantasy border, figures fall out of a great hellmouth (fig. 56) whose hugely bulging round eyeballs floating in dark sockets are similar to those later used in the most demonic of the chimeras (no. 18). It was as though in these drawings the young Viollet-le-Duc constructed in his imagination a Middle Ages that never was, but that he would eventually build.

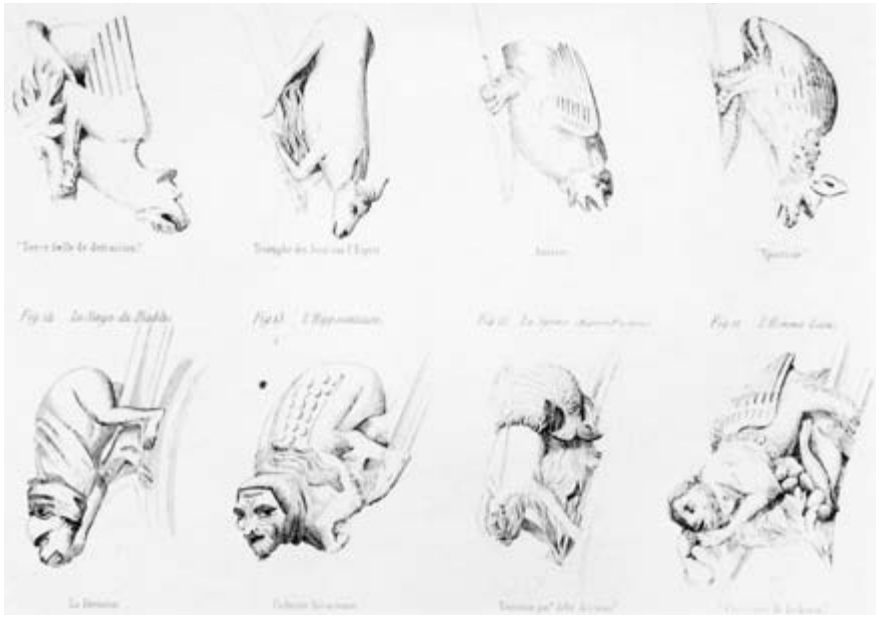
Striking details in the *Voyages pittoresque* specifically look forward to some of the chimeras. Dated 4 June 1842, just a year before the Notre-Dame project began to consume his time, a drawing Viollet-le-Duc made for the Picardie volume entitled *La Fête de fous à Ham* shows his increasing ability to evoke the carnivalesque, grotesque, mad Middle Ages so loved by the romantics (fig. 57). It is a vivid evocation of the Feast of Fools and shows clerics wearing animal masks of eerie insects and horse heads. Some of the statues at Notre-Dame have exactly these types of hoods,

58. Hooded bird chimera (no. 28). (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

59. Viollet-le-Duc, full-page marginal scene of black magic. From Baron Taylor's *Les Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France*, vol. 3 (Picardie, 1845), p. 128. Drawing in pen and gouache. MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

with two circular holes cut out for the eyes (no. 28; fig. 58). A darker drawing, more suggestive still of the brooding demon, depicts a scene of witchcraft in which vacant, staring ghouls crouching in the left margin predict some of the most memorable beasts of the balustrade (fig. 59).

Viollet-le-Duc was not an iconographer. His rationale for doing things was always pictorial rather than textual. In his arguments for the functional and aesthetic necessity of gargoyles, Viollet-le-Duc was going against fashion, which linked their strange forms to symbols of myth and religion. Although he would later describe the "bestiaries on the exterior of our great cathedrals, on these monuments where all the orders, natural and supernatural, physical and immaterial, are developed as in a book," his emphasis was much more on fidelity to nature than to any biblical text.[66] His "book" is not the Bible or even the volumes of the great medieval encyclopedists, but the eighteenth-century *Encyclopédie*. That the fifty-four chimeras do not form a coherent symbolic program was intentional. Viollet-le-Duc was opposed to the iconographers, most of whom were priests or, like Charles Montalembert, had toyed with the idea of ordination.



60. Madame Félicie d'Ayzac, "gargoyles" from Saint-Denis. From *De la zoologie hybride dans la statuaire chrétienne constatée par les monuments de l'antiquité catholique ou mémoire sur trente-deux statues symboliques observé dans la partie haute des tourelles de Saint-Denys*, 1847. (Photo: author.)

It was, however, not a man but a woman who published one of the first iconographic studies of gargoyles in 1847, the year before the first drawings were made for Notre-Dame. Félicie d'Ayzac was one of the first female art historians in France. She had been educated at the Legion of Honor School at Saint-Denis, where she later taught, and she published a work on thirty-two chimerical sculptures placed high on the towers of the Abbey Church of Saint-Denis, just outside Paris, entitled *Zoological Hybrids in Christian Statuary*.[67] The emphasis in the title upon the Catholic tradition of symbolism and the author's use of the term "mystical zoology" in her text is the exact antithesis of the ideals of Viollet-le-Duc, whose zoology was not mystical, but rational, and who had been raised by a progressive antiecclesiastical uncle, Étienne-Jean Delécluze. In the highly systematic and organized bestiary described by d'Ayzac, each statue corresponds to a particular vice based on a few dubious associations with patristic texts (fig. 60). The bull is, for example, "orgueil," the monkey "dérision," and the "homme-lion," or "lion-man," "curiosité de lécherie." While Viollet-le-Duc created a man-lion, it was not as a device in a systematic program of vices. One of the things that made his chimeras modern and not medieval is that they

refused any textual organizing principle that would make them coherent. This did not mean, however, that the engravings in this, the first illustrated study of gargoyles, did not exert an influence on the forms used by Viollet-le-Duc at Notre-Dame. There exist in the sculptor's album from Notre-Dame three pages of exact tracings after Félicie d'Ayzac.

Two Jesuits from Bourges, Charles Cahier and Arthur Martin, in 1847 published an article on the origins of gargoyles, "Quelques conjectures sur symbolisme extérieur des églises," in their journal *Mélanges d'archéologie*. Their etymological account relates creatures carved on the roofs of buildings to the word *magot*, which is based on the biblical giant Magog. Holy scripture provided the source for every element of the church, including the practice of "populat[ing] with fantastic monsters the gutters and the high galleries of churches. There these magots, grimacing from the heights of roofs and steeples, represent the legions of the enemy of salvation, who hover over the heads of the faithful in order to divert them from the right path, and against whom the only true refuge or remedy is within the church."[68]

Another prolific ecclesiastical iconographer of this period was the abbé Charles Auguste Auber, who described his vast three-volume *Histoire et théorie du symbolisme* (1871) on the title page as "necessary to architects, theologians, glass painters, decorators, archaeologists, and all those who are called upon to organize the *construction or restoration* of religious buildings."[69] According to Auber, gargoyles represented demons conquered by the church and made to perform menial tasks, like carrying off water. The fact that this work was aimed at those responsible for restoring and creating neomedieval churches reveals the important relationship between iconographic scholarship coming from within the church itself and the re-creation of the ideal Middle Ages. Viollet-le-Duc avoided such prescriptions. Because he saw the cathedrals as products of the lay intelligence of the architect, he also mistrusted folkloric interpretations of their power or magic, a position that was later echoed by Émile Mâle, who from an even more modern, purist, and Catholic revival position at the end of the century argued against the overwrought interpretations of the earlier generation. For Mâle, the gargoyle—created in the scholastic era—did not fit into his vision of cathedrals as lithic equivalents of Vincent of Beauvais's thirteenth-century encyclopedia, the *Speculum naturale*, or *The mirror of nature*.[70] Its excessive projecting form had no scriptural authority and was thus meaningless, except in some vague mystical sense. "What do they mean, those long-necked gargoyles who howl in the heights? . . . No time and no people have ever conceived more terrible specters; they are part wolf, part caterpillar, part bat. They are realistic in a way that makes them more frightening. In the garden behind Notre-Dame of Paris we may still see a few of them, abandoned to the ravages of time. They resemble unevolved monsters of

the Tertiary age, crumbling bit by bit and preparing to disappear." Antithetical to the order[71] that Mâle sought to find reflected in stone, gargoyles were the cracks in his mirror, stones that did not preach but screamed prehuman cries: "No symbolism can explain these monstrous creatures of the cathedrals. The bestiaries are silent. Such creations came from the imaginations of the people. These gargoyles, resembling the vampires of cemeteries, and the dragons vanquished by ancient bishops, survived in the depths of peoples' consciousness; they came from ancient fireside tales. They are souvenirs of distant ancestors, the last image of a lost world: here the sombre and powerful genius of the Middle Ages bursts into full expression."[72]

Rather than the "zoologie mystique" propounded by the symbolists and iconographers, Viollet-le-Duc in his entry "Animals" in the *Dictionnaire* called such sculptures of the cathedrals "a natural history."[73] Rather than a "Bible in stone," they formed part of a declaration of artistic independence and scientific observation. This was the view of several writers who influenced Viollet-le-Duc. Ludovic Vitet, for example, published in 1845 a monograph on the Church of Notre-Dame at Noyon that claimed the advance of the Gothic style resulted from "the spirit of liberty, the secular and lay spirit."[74] Likewise, Daniel Ramée, in his architectural manual of 1843, celebrated the Gothic era as one that saw "the tendency toward secularization."[75] The restorer wrote of himself as an enemy of the "symbolisateurs," reiterating his view that Gothic art is inherently rational and that "it might better be designated under the name of lay art."[76] It would thus be fruitless to employ the Bible-based iconographic methods of Didron and Mâle to decode the chimeras, because, to their designer, their visual power was more important than their sacred symbolism. Were they in this sense designed specifically to confound the programmatic iconographic fantasies of the symbolist school? By making them both repugnant and beautiful, both monstrous and naturalistic, their designer ensured they were more than expressions of the word *magot*, which the scholar Pierre-Daniel Huet had derived over a century earlier from the word *imago*.[77] Viollet-le-Duc's images are not biblical, but the products of his own imagination combined with his careful observation of nature. We have to treat them not as thirteenth-century statues to be decoded in terms of a medieval "Bible in stone," but as nineteenth-century images related to contemporary styles, ideas, and political concerns. The representation of a bull, a half-man, half-lion, or even a demon cannot mean the same thing in 1850 as it did in 1250. This is the point of this book, to unravel an ironic, uncanny, and thoroughly modern iconography of Viollet-le-Duc's anti-iconographic imagination.

There is a paradox here, of course. It was precisely because Viollet-le-Duc's imagination was so powerfully stimulated by medieval art that the images he produced have a deep affinity with the building he was restoring. Although at the beginning

61. Leering monster in the southern edge of the canopy over the gallery of kings, Notre-Dame, Paris, ca. 1220. (Photo: author.)

of the *Projet* the architects refer to a number of archaeological and historical studies from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that they aimed to utilize in order to help them restore the cathedral to its original state, they came to depend more and more upon what they found on the building itself. Every headless gargoyle and worn stone held vital clues. In this respect the demonic imagery exploited in the chimeras has its sources in the medieval building. In his 1856 *Description* Viollet-le-Duc noted that Notre-Dame revealed a powerful "demonography, utilizing a singular imagination in the forms of devils and the invention of tortures."[78] Here he was referring to medieval carvings that are still visible at the edges of the building and that clearly influenced him in creating the chimeras. At the south side of the south tower, as part of the canopied frieze that runs over the gallery of kings, lurks a vestigial early thirteenth-century human monster with bloated lips and gargantuan jowls. His hands seem to part the foliage to peer out with a furrowed intense brow, a perplexed relative of the giant Magog totally ignored by those who have tried to read the "Bible in stone" (fig. 61). It is in looking closely at this face that we realize how carefully Viollet-le-Duc himself looked.

These monstrous sculptural details of the facade of Notre-Dame were completed when the bishop of Paris was William of Auvergne, one of the great theologians of the demonic in the early thirteenth century. In his *De universo* he describes *cacodaemones*, *fauni*, *stryges*, *lamiae*, and other nocturnal demons who prey on humans in

62. *Luxuria*, from hell scenes on right archivolt of the central portal of Last Judgment, Notre-Dame, Paris, ca. 1220, taken from scaffolding during restoration, 1999. (Photo: author.)

the form of hideous hags and misshapen fearful creatures, partly in order to distinguish what he calls "old wives' tales" from actual diabolical infestations.[79] Even an intellectual cleric trained at the University of Paris viewed the demons carved on the cathedrals as realities. Likewise, Villard de Honnecourt, whom Viollet-le-Duc so admired, drew in profile a crouching horned devil on the first page of his famous album of drawings, perhaps as a way to protect its precious contents. By contrast, Viollet-le-Duc did not see his liminal demonic creations as magically functional. His restored romantic monsters are effective perhaps because no one believed in them any more. By contrast, Gothic gargoyles always presented a danger of actual possession, of not rejecting the evil eye but projecting it. That is why these elements had to be carefully placed at corners, which were sites of danger. To give them too much priority, to make them central and give them the "starring roles" they enjoy in the restored cathedral, would have been far too close to empowering them for medieval viewers.

Thirteenth-century sculptors had not been afraid of shocking beholders into penitence with horror and ugliness, pushing human and demon so close together that their outlines became indistinct. This was the point of the hell scenes carved in the lower right archivolts of the central portal of Notre-Dame, where a bloated queen probably representing the sexual sin of *Luxuria* sits with balloonlike breasts on top of a king (who is being buggered by a demon with a stick) and a bishop sticking out a fat tongue along with a furious mixture of brilliantly carved demons and sinners (fig. 62). A figure crouched on the outer right edge has the same beaked nose and large ear as the melancholy demon, perched on the edge of hell. Viollet-le-Duc so loved this

image that he drew it and had it reproduced in his *Dictionnaire*—quite a radical act considering the prudishness of the period, sometimes shocked by the visibility of an ankle.[80] In such sculptures the body is brought fully into play in order to be negated. This was the Middle Ages that Viollet-le-Duc as a nineteenth-century bourgeois artist could not replicate. Viollet-le-Duc took notes dispassionately from this repertoire of fear and pain, turning the horror into something less visceral. It is when one sees these nooks and crannies of Notre-Dame, these original fragments of horror that I was lucky enough to see close up from the scaffolding during the recent cleaning in August 1998, that the nineteenth-century transformation of the cathedral becomes all the more evidently a process of normalization. Only perhaps Lassus in some of the newly discovered drawings was sensitive to these more ominous faces half hidden on the cathedral.

It is surprising that, soon after their creation, the chimeras of Notre-Dame were taken to be authentic medieval sculptures, since nineteenth-century commentators often stress the difference between old and new. In his 1895 study *The Evil Eye* Frederick Thomas Elworthy describes how "the feeling and keen imagination which created the evils of our medieval churches came of a lively faith in their reality. Nowadays such things are mere decoration, servile copies of the oddities invented by our forefathers, but without either knowledge or belief as to their meaning or intention." Likewise, according to Sidney Heath, "a comparison between an old and a modern gargoyle will prove that when science destroyed the belief in evil spirits and dragons, it robbed the sculptor of the only incentive he had to fashion them."[81] But what does this nostalgia for the irrational really suggest? The modern monster was not merely an empty simulacrum or copy of something believed in long ago. Viollet-le-Duc's chimeras are not copies of anything medieval, but totally original, and in this respect they are new expressions of the irrational. It was Viollet-le-Duc's genius that he did not simply reiterate an obsolete demonic repertoire, but forged a new and contemporary concept of monstrosity on the balustrade of Notre-Dame. The monsters that lurked in the bourgeois shadows of Paris in 1850 were, unlike those that flickered by the fires in 1250, all too human. The nightmares that disturbed the sleep of nineteenth-century Parisians were far more troubling precisely because they were not so domestic . . . they were in fact uncanny—or "unhomely," in Freud's later formulation.

"Whatever reminds us of this 'compulsion' to repeat is regarded as uncanny."[82] The uncanny is one of the most important concepts structuring the production and reception of Viollet-le-Duc's chimeras. As supposed restorations of what was once there, they are haunted by their own ghosts, as repetitions. The concept of the uncanny was first formulated in the early nineteenth century by such romantic writers

as Friedrich Schelling, to describe a kind of haunting, a revisiting by a power considered long dead. The generation of romantic writers that most influenced Viollet-le-Duc included the writer and author of the *Voyages pittoresques*, Charles Nodier, who, in addition to writing terrifying ghost stories, described the uncanny spatial effects in Giambattista Piranesi's prison images. He also saw in Gothic architecture the same potential to arouse disquiet in the spectator. This is the effect of the plates of the *Voyages pittoresques* which present medieval monuments as though they were the stage sets of tales of terror. As Hélène Cixous has said, "The uncanny (*Unheimliche*) presents itself, first of all, only at the fringe of something else."[83] In many of Viollet-le-Duc's marginal drawings for the project the uncanny is a specific and desired effect (fig. 59). The uncanny has been called "the quintessentially bourgeois kind of fear: one carefully bounded by the limits of real material security and the pleasure principle afforded by a terror that was, artistically at least, kept well under control."[84] When Viollet-le-Duc designed the chimeras for the balustrade, he was seeking exactly this balance between an aesthetics of containment and a recuperation of the fear that had not been felt for centuries. But nothing ever really repeats itself exactly, and what we shall see played out in these monsters does not have much to do with the return of the repressed Middle Ages. They have a more contemporary charge, resonant with the years of their creation, when they represented the bloody specters of revolution and violence, the gnawing fear of, as well as desire for, beautifully diseased demons that stood at every street corner, and ultimately they were Paris itself.

There was one other vestige of the medieval city that evinced a powerful aura for people in the nineteenth century and that influenced the creation of the chimeras of Notre-Dame. This was the Tour Saint-Jacques, to be discussed in the next chapter, since it is intimately connected with Victor Hugo's influence on the restoration. In Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831), Claude Frollo looks through his window to see "the immense church of Notre-Dame, whose black sillhouette, with its twin towers, its ribs of stone and its monstrous cruppers, stood out against the starlit sky like an enormous two-headed sphinx sitting in the midst of the town."[85] This reference introduces yet another odd visual ancestor, if we are tracing a genealogy of monstrosity for the chimeras of the cathedral. Viollet-le-Duc was always fascinated by the origins or art in ancient Egypt, and one of the important sources for his beasts is not to be found in the Western medieval notion of the gargoyle, but in that much older stone guardian of the sacred gate, the sphinx. Egyptian sphinxes had become very popular in early nineteenth-century Paris following Napoléon's campaign in Egypt.[86] Charles Delon in his *Notre capitale Paris* described the great stone birds of the cathedral's balcony "perched like vultures of Egypt on the balconies of minarets."[87] One of the chimeras, known as Horus (no. 25), even bears the head of the

63. Horus chimera (no. 25). MAP CNMHS. (Photo: Jannie Mayer.)

falcon-headed offspring of Isis and Osiris (fig. 63).

Parisians who watched the restoration progress found the growing gallery of gargoyles and chimeras especially fascinating. Fernand Boissard, writing in the popular journal *L'Illustration* on 24 January 1852, described how the gutters, "which gave to the monument a certain bourgeois physiognomy have been replaced by beautiful gargoyles with the heads of chimeras, hydras, serpents, and dragons. . . . We have seen many of these restored gargoyles and have been surprised to see how much the current architects have identified with the Gothic style down to its finest details and its most unexpected and grotesque fantasies."[88] The journalist described the forest of ladders and scaffolding, where, as if on the hulk of a giant ship, masons, carpenters, and sculptors were busy at work. At the end of his article he noted that the scaffolding had now been taken down, lamenting that work had halted because funds had been exhausted. On 30 April 1850 work had been suspended, and there followed a two-year lull. In a report to the Historic Monuments Commission on 9 January of the same year, Mérimée, Viollet-le-Duc's close friend and man in charge of overseeing all restoration work in France, had complained that it was crucial to continue the project, because only part of the west facade and the choir had as yet been finished.[89] How many of the chimeras were actually complete by this date? How were they carved and by whom? Searching the restoration records to answer these questions, I often came across the name of the man who made the sculptures and whose involvement takes us into the everyday experience of the restoration, which we must now consider, not through the eyes of their creator wrestling with the chimeras of his imagination, but through those of the sculptor who had to hew them out of stone.

2. Monsters of Stone

THE GARGOYLES OF VICTOR JOSEPH PYANET

1 · *The Sculptor of Ornament*

That medieval French artists very rarely signed their works does not mean that they were poor, submissive machines; it only proves that they thought, not without reason, that a name on the bottom of a statue adds nothing to its real value in the eyes of tasteful people. . . . In this they were simple, like men who count more on their demeanor and way of carrying themselves to be well received everywhere than on the decorations with which they might adorn their buttonholes.

VIOLLET-LE-DUC, *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française*[1]

In his entry "Sculpture" in the *Dictionnaire,* Viollet-le-Duc contrasts the selfless humility of the man who carved the statues of the great French cathedrals with the hubris of his modern counterpart. The lay artists of the thirteenth century "saw art in the work of art, not themselves . . . they were not inclined to see *their* statue, independently from the monument to which they attached their works."[2] Moreover, no distinction existed between *statuaire* and *sculpture d'ornement*. However, as we know, the carvings at Notre-Dame do not date from the thirteenth but from the nineteenth century. They were produced within the same modern, capitalist system of labor that rebuilt much of Paris. In addition, the man who hewed them out of limestone is designated with the title "sculptor of ornaments" and was lower in status than the individual "statuaires" who carved the jamb figures on the portals. The only thing that these stone creatures share with their creator's views about how sculpture was produced during the thirteenth century is their anonymity. But, as we shall see, even this turns out to be a chimera, an illusion.

The name of the artist who carved the beasts designed by Viollet-le-Duc has been almost totally forgotten, although it often appears in the documents that record every centime spent on the project. At the opening of the building site nearly a hundred sculptors solicited the minister for the chance to work on the restoration. When Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc sent their report to the minister on 9 March 1847 concerning the category of sculptural ornament, they had chosen five men, each of whom was

given responsibility for a particular part of the edifice. The sculpture of the choir was given to Jacques-Eugène Caudron, the transepts to Joseph-Jean Bies and Constant Delafontaine, the nave to Pierre Martrou, and the west facade to Pyanet.[3] The latter's name does not occur among those making bids for work, which suggests that Pyanet was already well known to the two architects.[4]

So who was Victor Joseph Pyanet? In Emmanuel Bénézit's dictionary of artists he is listed as an "ornamental sculptor, working in Paris in 1833."[5] Born in 1796, he was nearly twenty years older than Viollet-le-Duc and was a man in his fifties when working at Notre-Dame. In 1848 he was living on the rue Furstenburg on the Left Bank, the same street where Delacroix had his studio. Ten years later he is described as living on the nearby rue Madame. He often worked in association with other more famous sculptors. For example, in 1841 he carved the relief representing the gestures of the deaf-mute alphabet on the tomb of its inventor the abbé de l'Epée, as adjunct to the bronzes by Auguste Préault, in the Church of Saint-Roch in Paris. His association with the Historic Monuments Commission began in 1843, and from then on he seems to have been exclusively involved in the greatest restoration projects of the period. In 1849 he must have been incredibly busy, since in addition to Notre-Dame he was also working at the Sainte-Chapelle, where he was the "sous traitant" to another major sculptor, Henri-Joseph-François Baron de Triqueti (1807–75). Triqueti was close to the royal family under the July Monarchy and a much-sought-after sculptor who worked in a neoclassical style. In fact he had subcontracted all the carving he was supposed to execute at the Sainte-Chapelle to Pyanet at a much lower price. In a letter to the minister of public works of 12 October 1849 Lassus complains of this irregularity, asking that Pyanet receive his proper dues, since he is "in need of money." Lassus described him as "a very capable sculptor of ornaments who has done his job perfectly," noting how difficult it is to find skilled carvers who can execute sculptures "in the style of the Middle Ages." He noted that at Notre-Dame, of fifteen sculptors originally chosen, Pyanet was among the six that had been retained.[6] Always playing the underdog artistically, Pyanet can now be appreciated as an incredibly gifted sculptor, able to transcribe a small drawing a few inches high into a massive, three-dimensional stone sculpture. Other examples of his work can be seen in the capital in additions made to the flamboyant Gothic Church of Saint-Séverin and in the new neo-Gothic disaster of Sainte-Clotilde, completed in 1853 by Théodore Ballu. Among his wood carvings are the jube and stairs as well as the two lovely angels in the upper chapel of the Sainte-Chapelle.

But it was his brilliant beasts, not his angels, that made Pyanet so sought after in these years. Also under Viollet-le-Duc's direction he had created the ominous crow-

gargoyles at the Church of Saint-Nazaire in Carcassonne, as well as the vast gargoyles that were so prominent in the newly restored cathedral at Albi.

In the estimate Pyanet drew up on 22 January 1847 for the work at Notre-Dame, he stated that he would take responsibility for carving all of the chimeras![7] This describes his work as the "reparation de la sculpture de 56 gros animaux qui sont aux angles." These animals were priced at 115 francs each, making 6,440 francs in total. He also lists making "deux grands gargouilles" for the balustrade below the towers and 188 colonettes. The document is signed by the sculptor himself.[8] This *devis* was approved by the minister on 5 May 1847 and also gave him the task of completing 2,700 "crochets" (the fist-sized bulbous crockets that decorate almost every edge of the towers) at 12 francs each, 7,000 alone for the "porte centrale." When one looks at another document, of 31 May 1847, which details the work that Pyanet had been approved to undertake, it is hard to imagine that a single man could do such a vast amount of stone carving.

Two years later, however, Pyanet had completed no fewer than nineteen of the "gros animaux" and their original price of 115 francs had increased to 130 francs. Someone else later crossed out this price and wrote "105" in red, making a total of 1,995 francs. This document also stipulates the size of the sculptures at 1.30 metres (4 feet, 3 inches).[9] Pyanet was eventually paid 350 francs for each chimera—more than three times the original price listed in the estimate of 1847, perhaps suggesting their increased importance in Viollet-le-Duc's scheme. Yet a sculptor like Adolphe-Victor Geoffroy-Dechaume could claim an even higher price for his work. The average price for a jamb figure at Notre-Dame was 3,000 francs, and for the Christ of the central trumeau of the western portal Geoffroy-Dechaume received 5,800 francs. Pierre Martrou, another of the five original "sculpteurs ornemanistes," had to take over responsibility for the gargoyles of the choir from Caudron, who died in 1848. He received 100 francs for each of the 32 gargoyles and 140 for the larger ones at cornice level. To put these sums in perspective, one must remember that in 1840 the average yearly living expenses for the household of a skilled worker in Paris were approximately 950 francs—about the price of almost seven of the larger gargoyles at Notre-Dame.[10]

Further evidence that Pyanet sculpted the chimeras is contained in the *Journal des travaux*. His name first appears as early as 1 June 1845, when he is required to make casts ("a faire d'estamper") of some of the capitals of the gallery of kings still in situ which would eventually need to be replaced. On 29 July 1848 there is the first entry to mention the carving of a chimera—one of the birds on the angle of the balustrade—but the carver is not named. An entry on 17 September of that

year describes the "placement of the corner beasts on the balustrades of the facade" (épandage des bêtes d'angles des balustrade de la façade). This is an important date, suggesting that a number of the chimeras for the west facade had been carved and were ready to be fixed in place. That all the chimeras had not been completed before work was halted in 1850 is indicated by the chronology of Viollet-le-Duc's dated drawings discussed in the previous chapter and the fact that many of those on the south tower and behind the facade were not designed, let alone carved, until after work had resumed in 1853.

In this second phase Pyanet's name occurs even more frequently, both on Viollet-le-Duc's drawings and in the *Journal des travaux*. Between April and June 1853, he receives drawings for six of the numbered beasts.[11] On 30 August 1853 is an important entry: "The beast of the angle of the balustrade of the gallery ordered on the eleventh has been finished, two sculptors have been employed with this work (the goat)."[12] Carving this superb creature (no. 33) with its fabulously shaggy coat thus took two sculptors nineteen days (fig. 64). Haste may have been the reason that two artists were employed, unless Pyanet was indisposed for some reason and thus the statue had to be completed by someone else. However, again on 31 August 1853, the daybook describes how two sculptors began work on an eagle.[13] It is not clear whether these descriptions of Pyanet's production refer to the beast alone or to the complete stone, which included the piece of balustrade and the attached chimera on it. That they more likely refer to the statue alone is suggested by the fact that sometimes Pyanet worked so quickly that the carvers who cut the balustrade pieces lagged behind him. This happened on 27 June 1853, when carving the chimeras for the back of the south tower had to be suspended until the ledge on which they were to sit had been finished. This goes against the architect's repeated emphasis throughout the *Dictionnaire* that the mason and the sculptor worked as one at Notre-Dame, as he believed they had done during the Middle Ages. Economic pressures and deadlines meant that in reality Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc were the managers of a factory for the production of Gothic sculpture, in which there was a clear division of labor and something of a production line. Increasing specialization was happening in all skilled trades at this time, as subcontracting intensified.[14] Historians of medieval architecture have in fact shown that these kinds of processes of architectural serial production and piecework had first been developed during the construction of thirteenth-century cathedrals like Amiens.[15]

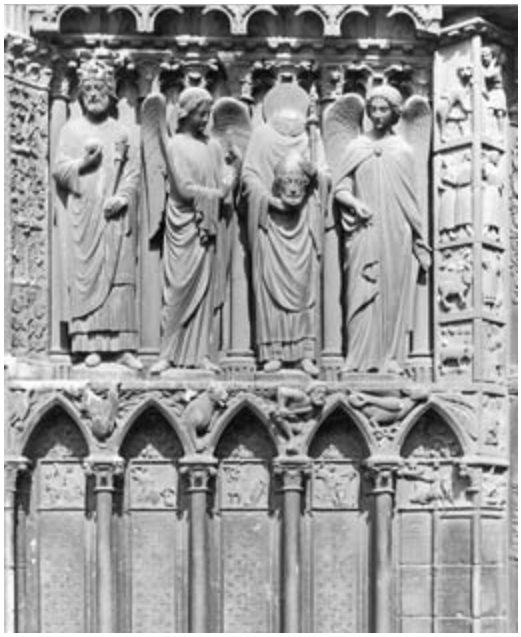
64. Séraphin-Médéric Mieusement, goat chimera (no. 33) carved by Victor Pyanet, Notre-Dame, Paris. From *Mieusement, cathédrales de France*, 1881–1905. (Photo: author.)

Studies of Notre-Dame have mostly ignored Pyanet's role, wrongly attributing the chimeras to Geoffroy-Dechaume, who was in charge of the sculptors' workshop.[16] This is not all that surprising, since stone sculptures in nineteenth-century Paris, like the interminable rows of female caryatids on Haussmannian facades that

65. Part of the report showing different categories of work at Notre-Dame, 28 February 1852. Archives of MAP, carton 2117, (Photo: author.)

line the streets, were carved by anonymous artisans after a master's graphic or plastic model. Anonymity was in attendance at Notre-Dame, but not in the same way as in the thirteenth century. Rather, it resulted from a modern political system that placed the maker of gargoyles low in a hierarchy radiating from the minister, through the superintendent of monuments, Viollet-le-Duc himself, to two supervisors, to Geoffroy-Dechaume and the other "statuaires," down to the dozen makers of ornamental sculpture, and, even farther, right down to the various levels of masons who cut and placed the new stone.

The complex paperwork of restoration *projets*, *devis*, and *dossiers de travaux*, emphasizes the role of the central administration in the process, making the work of Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc a textual as well as an architectural monument. A report on work executed in 1850, presented to "Monsieur Le Ministre de l'Instruction publique et des Cultes" on 28 February 1852 and laid out in nine columns, shows just how complex was the organization managed by Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc (fig. 65). It is divided horizontally into "Cathédrale" and "Sacristie," which had been kept separate in accounts since the beginning. The first column lists the names of "Entrepreneurs"



66. Notre-Dame, Paris, west front, north portal of the Virgin, left jamb figure of Constantine (by Jean-Louis Chenillion), an angel (by Prinsay), Saint Denis (by Adolphe-Victor Geoffroy-Dechaume), an angel (by Charles-Édouard Elmerich), and the beasts below by Victor Pyanet. (Photo, before recent restoration: James Austin.)

and shows the enormous range of skills involved in the restoration of a vast structure like Notre-Dame. First there are Sauvage and Milon for "Maconerrie" (masonry), Bellu for "Charpente" (the all-important wooden scaffolding), Duffner for "Serrurerie" (ironwork), and Durand for "Plomberie" (plumbing). These men were the contractors of large teams of manual workers who made up the mass of bodies at the site. Larger sums were spent paying these outfits for their services in the sixth column than for the work of the two sculptors listed below them.

Here we see Pyanet's name above that of Geoffroy-Dechaume's in the far left column, where he is described as a sculptor. Significantly, Geoffroy-Dechaume gets an extra line not under "Sculpture," but under "Statuaire." It might seem at first that Pyanet is the better paid of the two, since he receives 19,204 francs compared with Geoffroy-Dechaume's 7,150. But this is deceiving, since, as we have seen, Geoffroy-Dechaume received a larger sum for each sculpture he made.

Compared with other sculptors working at Notre-Dame, even Geoffroy-Dechaume, Pyanet did far more carving. Most of it is high above our heads, screaming and hissing in the rain. Only occasionally can we detect his hand at ground level working alongside the more elevated statue makers. A drawing in the "sculptor's album" shows that it was he who executed the four more delicately animalistic evangelist symbols placed in the lower corners of the central portal. While these were replacements for totally destroyed sculptures, another document shows that he also

restored smaller elements, such as the heads on a series of damaged carvings under the feet of the jamb statues of the Virgin portal, including a dragonlike creature on the right, whose snorting muzzle and slithery tail bring something of the chimeras to ground level (fig. 66).[17] Clearly Pyanet was no slavish executant. There are, not unexpectedly, subtle differences between those designs by the architect that are extant and the sculptor's execution of them. Some of the latter's drawings, especially in the early phases of the project, do not seem fully worked out. Such is the case with the 1848 drawing for the bowed dog devouring grapes (no. 23), which is still, however, inscribed as approved for execution (fig. 34). The drawing in fact seems rather vaguely realized compared with the strong curve of the creature's back in Pyanet's stone version. The innovation in the architect's particular design here is that, unusually among the chimeras, this giant creature has brought itself up on its hind legs and bows down to feed greedily. But the twist of its knobbly spine and powerful haunches as well as its almost pathetic voraciousness, its deeply animal hunger, are expressed far more powerfully in Pyanet's sculpture (fig. 35). The relationship between drawing and executed image seems to come closer together in the second phase of the chimera constructions in 1854, when the lights and darks of Viollet-le-Duc's fluidly conceived gouache designs, like that of the basilisk (fig. 45), are more smoothly transcribed into three dimensions by the talented sculptor (fig. 67).

Although Pyanet was not given the status of a *statuaire*, when he made the chimeras he was in fact carving statues. Viollet-le-Duc had conceived and designed each one as an autonomous being, marking its own space and territory. The nineteenth century was the great age of "statuomanie."[18] Nearly every square in France was filled with three-dimensional, usually human egos made of stone. The chimeras have something of this bloated individualism. This is what makes them so profoundly unmedieval. Thirteenth-century sculptors carved figures as members of larger groups, like the choirs of angels that frame the central doorway below. Even their jamb figures, which are more akin to modern statues, are members of a columnar choir before they are distinct personalities. By contrast, each of Viollet-le-Duc's chimeras, each of Pyanet's statues, is an egotistical, willful beast driven by its own desire. This explains their subsequent popularity as emblems of isolated and tormented human consciousness. No one has ever identified with Geoffroy-Dechaume's intentionally headless statue of Saint Denis, even though he is the patron saint of Paris (fig. 66), and of course no one was meant to. But the melancholy demon was to immediately become a site of profound individual empathy. The ethereal calm of these stiff saints evokes the death of God in the nineteenth century, whereas people sensed a spark of something alive, a spirit, in the more animated eyes of demonic beasts.

Some of this resulted from the working methods of the different sculptors. Because

67. Basilisk carved by Victor Pyanet (no. 44). Notre-Dame, Paris. (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

the chimeras were meant to be viewed from afar, the sculptor was freer to leave large surfaces of the scooped-out stone in a rough state, with its bold and angular projections. In the case of the jamb statues for the west front, Viollet-le-Duc or Lassus always provided drawings that were first executed as small models or maquettes; once accepted, they were remodeled in plaster to actual size. Life-size models were not used, however, with the chimeras, which suggests a more direct relay between the architect's two-dimensional design and the final product.

Anxieties about historical accuracy were present throughout the restoration. On 24 January 1849, a special commission that included the bishop of Quimper and the archbishop of Paris arrived to critique some life-size models for the statues of apostles slated for the central portal. The *Journal des travaux* records that they thought Saint Peter's hair was wrong and he was too antique looking, the draperies on Saint John were too large, and Saint James was far too meager in appearance. They asked the sculptors to modify certain gestures and even iconographic attributes! No wonder, with so many cooks spoiling the broth, that the finished jamb statues seem so lifeless. For even though medieval sculptures emphasized a kind of sculptural communitas over individual identity, this rarely resulted in the kind of bland uniformity of execution that characterizes these restored statues. Looking at them, an observer finds it difficult to distinguish between the hand of a Michel Pascal and that of an Armand Toussaint or a Jean-Louis Chenillion, all sculptors who worked on the jamb statues. But this is not because they were all restraining their individual style to humbly conform to the myth of the communal spirit of the thirteenth-century cathedral. No, it was because they were so carefully supervised as they strove to execute Viollet-le-Duc's drawings to the minutest degree, their efforts vetted and even at times rejected not only by the master, but by committee. The monotony of the sculptures can also be explained by the fact that plaster casts were made after other statues, and life-size models were then tested in situ.[19] By contrast, in only one case did Viollet-le-Duc demand that a maquette be made for a gargoyle. There is no evidence that Pyanet was required to make such models for the chimeras.

This kind of centralized planning did not happen in the thirteenth century, as we can see from the sculptures on the western portals of Reims Cathedral, where jamb statues exhibiting traits of totally different generations and styles are placed alongside one another in the central portal. Likewise, there is no evidence that sculptors followed detailed drawings, let alone maquettes. Records at Reims also show that gargoyles had not been specified by the cathedral chapter, which directed all building activity, and that in making the ones that appear there the sculptors tended to follow their own models.[20] By contrast, at the new Notre-Dame, the sculptors were bound to adhere to Viollet-le-Duc's detailed plans, which included designs for every stone.

In this sense a truly spontaneous approach was not available to Victor Pyanet—whose every clink of the chisel was a minute transcription of the values of light and shade in Viollet-le-Duc's drawings. The 1847 submissions for jobs as "sculptures d'ornements" make this clear.[21]

II · *The Myth of the Medieval Craftsman*

We have touched upon the hierarchical organization of the restoration project, but let us now look at the list of positions drawn up by Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc in 1845. Under the two architects there were to be two inspectors to oversee work on the site and two "sous-inspecteurs conducteurs," one for the cathedral (originally Émile Boeswillwald) and one for the sacristy (Janvier). These men were not allowed to leave the site during work hours. Every large drawing of masonry attachments for 1846 is signed not only by the inspectors but also by the architect himself, suggesting that not a single ordinary stone was cut or put in place until it had been verified first on paper by the master.

Under the two inspectors was a "verificateur," who did the accounts, and one "gardien." The latter was to receive a salary of 720 francs per year, whereas the two architects were to be paid on a sliding scale. This granted them 3.5 percent of the first 100,000 francs spent on the project, to diminish by half a percent for every additional 100,000 francs. This arrangement was radically changed after cost overruns forced the work site to be shut down in April 1850.

At this time, Viollet-le-Duc presented new estimates, including 273,000 francs for the fifty-eight statues of kings and large sums for the statues of the three portals. The monsters had in fact come first, before the kings, the prophets, and even the Virgin herself! As many as twenty-nine had been completed before the forced closure of the chantier. After new funds were disbursed and work resumed in 1853, Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc moved their oversight of the work to one of the sculptor's sheds in the gardens on the south side of the cathedral, allowing greater surveillance. Such a system seems entirely modern. Pyanet was directly affected, evidenced by the sums he was charged for breakages. On 12 August 1853 "notification was given to him to reimburse . . . the sum of sixty-six francs for chairs that had disappeared or were broken during the course of his work."[22]

It has been suggested that in constituting the chantier of Notre-Dame Viollet-le-Duc was trying to re-create the system that built the medieval cathedrals.[23] But this division of sculptors into two distinct camps, statuaires and sculpteurs d'ornements, following the Beaux-Arts tradition, goes against the medieval practices that Viollet-le-Duc himself had insisted upon when he wrote the entry "Sculpture" in his *Diction-*

naire. He believed that in the thirteenth century the same mason who carved a jamb statue might also carve a gargoyle, but when it came to his own building the two forms of sculpture were assigned to two quite differently trained sculptors. A recent analysis of the different types of stone used by Viollet-le-Duc in the restoration of the western facade is more evidence of the "secondary" status of the "ornamental" sculpture. Eighteen different types of stone were used from the Paris basin or Burgundy, none of it identical to that quarried for the original building, which had long before been exhausted. Whereas for portal sculpture at eye level the highest quality limestones were employed, all the chimeras and their portions of the balustrade were carved from softer Soissons stone and the rest of the pieces of the balustrade from another, even cheaper type.[24]

Viollet-le-Duc's self-proclaimed attempts to re-create at Notre-Dame the mythic unity of the medieval cathedral construction yard are more likely part of an ideological ploy to cover up the fraught and difficult labor conditions of the period. The stones of Notre-Dame may have been designed to the minutest particular, but they had to be quarried, cut, and carved and then hauled into place by teams of skilled and unskilled laborers. Many of the men who erected scaffolding or mixed and carried mortar would have been seasonal migrants who came to Paris during the summer months mostly from the Limousin and who lived in squalid boarding houses on the Île-de-la-Cité or around the Hôtel de Ville. Masons' assistants were hired each dawn at the place de Grève just across the river, where Martin Nadaud describes them as shivering with cold, half starving, and "the last vestige of the old slave markets of antiquity."[25] The ordinary laborer worked thirteen hours a day for subsistence wages. Nadaud relates that as a mason's assistant he earned forty-two sous a day (just over two francs) while stonemasons earned fifty-five and journeymen seventy.

In the construction yard, which was on the south side of the cathedral, there was a communal life of incredible discipline and duress which involved a hierarchy of dozens of different skilled and semiskilled laborers. A series of photographs show some of the different stages of the restoration work, all taken from the left bank of the Seine. The earliest, by Hippolyte Bayard, shows the scaffolding erected on the south tower for the first campaign of work there, which also extended around the principle facade and remained in place from 1 April 1847 until August 1850.[26] The new sacristy is still under scaffolding and there are no chimeras on the balustrade. A slightly later photograph by Henri Le Secq, also taken before the scaffolding came down, shows the gleaming new sacristy and a few low huts of the workshops.[27] These sheds have expanded in another photograph, taken in 1851 during the stoppage of restoration (fig. 68). Here great blocks of stone and hundreds of planks of wood stand untouched, as if waiting to be put into action, and only a little scaffolding is affixed

68. Henri Le Secq, the towers and south transept and the restoration workshops, 1851. Paper negative cir. 722. (Photo: MAP CMN.)

69. Bisson Frères, south tower of Notre-Dame with scaffolding in place 1853. (Photo: BNF.)

to the southern nave buttresses. Most significant here, however, are the unmistakable silhouettes of the chimeras at the facade's western corners and southern edge, which stand out white and new against the dark stone. This visual evidence is supported in the *Journal des travaux* and the dated drawings discussed earlier, which suggests that the eastern-facing chimeras were completed only after work was resumed. A slightly later photograph by Bisson Frères from closer up and below the south tower shows new scaffolding of this second phase in place on the eastern, or back, flank of the balustrade in order to install these statues (fig. 69). There are no extant photographs taken closer up of the masons at work, only images showing the more prestigious jamb statues by Geoffroy-Dechaume finished and standing in the sunny, southern-facing construction yard.[28]

If Pyanet was not on the top rung with the small team of sculptors who carved

the statues for the western portals, he was certainly far above the six categories of ordinary workers who were paid by the day, not the piece. These consisted of the "tailleurs de pierre," or stonemasons of fine work, "morteurs," who lifted and fitted the stones together, "maçons," or masons, who cut the stone more crudely, "charpentiers," or carpenters, who built the complex scaffolding required, "menuisiers," or joiners, and "bardeurs," or roofers. In June 1859 there were fifty-two stoneworkers consisting of different categories—"tailleurs de pierre" and "scieurs," who were stonecutters, as well as "compagnons" and their "aides" or assistants—as well as fourteen "charpentiers," joiners, and "serrusiers," or workers in metal, making sixty-six workers in all. In the early years of the restoration, when there were even more massive amounts of stone to be cut, wooden scaffoldings to be erected, and stones to be hauled, as many as 251 "ouvriers" were counted on the site. Among those listed in the accounts are "compagnons," or journeymen, who were members of the Tour de France, a corporation of higher-status, highly skilled workers who had their own internal ranks and who traced their origins directly back to the cathedral builders of the Middle Ages and even the masons of Solomon's Temple.

An overidealized picture of *compagnonnage* still persists in France. Yet the myth of the skilled and valued craftsman in the period before mass production goes against the evidence provided by personal testimonies like Agricol Perdiguer's *Biographie de l'auteur du livre de compagnonnage* (Paris, 1846) which dwells on "the splinters that have entered his body, the falling wood that has injured him, the lung diseases caught breathing sawdust and finally, his suicidal thoughts."[29] Martin Nadaud's *Léonard, maçon de la Creuse*, which describes a painful apprenticeship struggling to lift heavy stones on his stomach to keep up with his master journeyman's masonry courses, numerous injuries, and thirteen- to sixteen-hour workdays, shows that the life of a construction worker in Paris in the 1830s and 1840s was hellish. Those men who managed to sustain their jobs at Notre-Dame during the interruptions between 1848 and 1864 worked under very different regimes, beginning under strict controls and poor wages, seeing a brief period of labor victory in 1848, but returning to even more repressive rules after 1852. Writing of the period before the 1848 revolution, Nadaud states that "in those days our laws were harsh and cruel. Besides articles 414, 415, and 416 of the penal code, which authorized the government to impose two years of prison on any worker who went on strike, we also had the law of 1834, which prohibited all meetings of more than twenty-one persons. It was as if the people were clamped in a vise. . . . The workers of Paris raised a cry of despair."[30] In this autobiography we see a darker side of the creation of great monuments like Notre-Dame, one that architectural historians tend to avoid—the sheer horror and desperation of human labor, much of it provided by adolescents as young as fifteen, who worked as

"garçons maçons," or mason's assistants, struggling up dangerous ladders with large loads on their backs to supply fresh mortar hundreds of times a day.

Whereas we have no written record of the building of Notre-Dame, every day of the twenty years of its restoration are recorded for posterity in the *Journal des travaux*. Here, along with the countless references to gargoyles and the erection of scaffolding, we read of the occasional visit of a dignitary like Prince Napoléon in 1859 and the English architect Augustus Pugin on 25 August 1849. There is also a lot about the weather, since snow and rain often stopped work. On 25 July 1849, for example, "the wind broke a gargoyle and one of the pinnacles of the sacristy." Yet more tumultuous social events have their impact on the daily life in the chantier, such as the revolution which took place in the last week of February 1848, when little work is recorded. Louis-Phillipe abdicated and fled to England, a republic was proclaimed, and a provisional government was installed at the Hôtel de Ville. Demonstrators forced themselves before the government and demanded a guarantee of "the right to labor" which resulted in a series of sweeping reforms which would have far-reaching implications for those men working on the cathedral and even for its architects. For example, it was recognized that workers should associate with one another in order to enjoy the legitimate benefits of their labor.[31]

During these months of revolution an ideology of mutual love between worker and manager was being propounded in Paris in the guise of a nostalgic dream of medieval order. On 2 April 1848 the *Journal des travaux* records that "the architects of the cathedral fraternized with the workers at the champ de Mars" (Les architectes de la cathédrale fraternisent avec les ouvriers de champ de Mars). This is significantly during the brief period after the February revolution when, in Maurice Agulhon's words, "on the level of protocol and symbolism, equality was born anew. Men addressed each other a 'citizen'; official letters were brought to a close with the expression 'Fraternal greetings.'"[32] *Compagnonnage* had high status in these spring months of 1848, as many of the leaders were masons and carpenters. But the uprising that began with brotherly love ended up a long and bloody battle, with fifteen hundred insurgents killed and another twelve thousand arrested and imprisoned. Only a year later, on 13 June 1849, we read in the *Journal des travaux* that, despite an attempted insurrection in the city, "workers in the chantier continued to work." It has been suggested that Viollet-le-Duc "could handle all the instruments used by builders and even by stonecutters. He could show a workman how to approach a job. He was therefore highly respected because he was not 'the architect,' 'the gentleman,' and this was most unusual in his time. He was always very close to his workers, in the medieval tradition."[33] These pronouncements should be taken with a pinch of salt, being those of the restorer's great-granddaughter, Geneviève Viollet-le-Duc,

STATUTS

DE LA

SOCIÉTÉ D'ARCHÉOLOGIE NATIONALE

FONDÉE A PARIS EN JANVIER 1848.

BUT DE LA SOCIÉTÉ.[1]

Depuis une vingtaine d'années, l'étude des antiquités nationales a p
des développements considérables; ce qui était autrefois le passe-temps

70. Statutes of the Société d'archéologie nationale. From *Annales archéologiques* 8 (1848): 237. (Photo: author.)

in an interview made in 1980. The architect was too busy a man with far too many other projects to supervise to be on-site every day or to be so closely involved with those working under him. The Church of Saint-Sernin in Toulouse, the Cathedral of Amiens, and the city of Carcassonne are but three of the many projects he was involved with during these years.

A few days before the revolutionary events of February 1848 we come across Pyanet's name again in an even more significant place. He is listed among a group of artists and archaeologists who founded the Société d'archéologie nationale. Lamenting the lack of medieval archaeology in the French educational curriculum, this group had aims that were democratic and part of the egalitarian spirit of the moment: to spread knowledge of these national arts to everyone—"littérateurs, artistes et ouvriers." In the publication of the statutes of the society in the periodical *Annales archéologiques* for 1848, Didron stated that the group was formed just before the revolution of February and took from political events a more urgent mission, which was the preservation of "the monuments of our land as the most precious part of the treasure of the nation."[34] Most striking is the total absence of any ecclesiastical

dignitary, making this organization distinct from other archaeological groups. Rather than symbolism and faith, these men were all interested in national archaeology as a "science" and as an educative tool. The illustration that opens this article shows a group of artists, a writer with a book, a mason with his measuring rod, and a sculptor carrying a statue of the Virgin and Child (fig. 70). They stand around a seated female figure—a personification of France, perhaps—seated at her desk, where she writes or draws in what might be seen as an image of Viollet-le-Duc surrounded by his team. The alphabetical list of founder-members includes not only such famous writers and archaeologists as Didron, as well as Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc, but also artists and sculptors who were working at Notre-Dame: Geoffroy-Dechaume, Toussaint, Pascal, and, significantly, Victor Pyanet, who is designated with the title "sculpteur."

Sadly for the future of national monuments in France, this organization never really got off the ground. Whereas in England champions of the Gothic revival like Ruskin and William Morris early on forged strong political links with democratic and even socialist organizations to build a bridge between medievalism and the popular imagination for subsequent generations, laying the foundations for the Arts and Crafts movement, in France the 1848 revolution cut short the potential for anything approaching the democratization of medievalism. Medieval art in France would for at least the next century be associated with the forces of Catholic conservatism, social elitism, esoteric occultism, and antimodernist mythmaking. Ferdinand de Guilhermy wrote to Viollet-le-Duc on 8 November 1849 that the society had failed due to the lack of interest of powerful men like Didron, who were not sympathetic to a group that "sought to dethrone and republicanize archaeology."[35] This letter is remarkable evidence of the conflicts between different factions within the pro-Gothic party and the extent to which Viollet-le-Duc at this decisive moment of French history was allied with the Republican position that brought him together with Pyanet. Perhaps it was at these meetings, aimed at making French medieval art known to a wider audience, that architect and sculptor discussed their collaboration on the chimeras.

The restoration of Notre-Dame must be viewed within the nineteenth century's long-drawn-out dream of an innocent Middle Ages, but it also exemplifies a particular moment of social and political tension (to be discussed in chap. 5). In 1852 the *directeur des cultes* argued that the restoration project itself might be a means of stabilizing social unrest. "The works done on cathedrals are no less advantageous from the economic and material point of view than they are from the religious and moral point of view. For at the same time as they encourage the union of spirits in a common objective of noble sacrifice, occupying their arms in every way, they give bread to the working class and give them by working together with the superior classes toward one aim which is also the fittest to establish between them, between all classes

and the state, the great and saintly rapport of mutual aid, reciprocal assistance and true brotherhood."[36]

III · *Life and Death on the Building Site*

At the very same moment Pyanet was carving a monstrous ornament to order in Paris, across the channel the English prophet of the Gothic revival was writing about the mental slavery of the modern worker, reduced to a machine in the factory system compared to the freedom of the medieval stone carver of the cathedrals. In "On the Nature of Gothic," a chapter of *The Stones of Venice* (1851–53), John Ruskin asks his reader to "look round this English room of yours, about which you have been so proud so often, because the work of it was so good and strong and the ornaments of it so finished" and to be horrified by the signs of slavery, torture, and human degradation contained in every molding. "And, on the other hand, go forth again to gaze upon the old cathedral front, where you have smiled so often at the fantastic ignorance of the old sculptors: examine once more those ugly goblins, and formless monsters, and stern statues, anatomiless and rigid; but do not mock at them, for they are signs of the life and liberty of every workman who struck the stone; a freedom of thought, and rank in scale of being, such as no laws, no charters, no charities can secure; but which it must be the first aim of all Europe at this day to regain for her children."[37]

Nikolaus Pevsner nicely contrasted the two founding fathers of modern medievalism—Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc—showing how each dreamed of a different Gothic.[38] Just as the drawings of the Englishman are suggestive and elusive and the Frenchman's renderings are rigorous and analytical, for Ruskin every gargoyle was a unique expression of the individual, whereas for Viollet-le-Duc each was an expression of a preexisting rational order. Although in some writings Viollet-le-Duc came closer to Ruskin in idealizing a conflict-free medieval system of labor, in actuality his restoration project at Notre-Dame was just another factory—for the mass production of the medieval. This partly explains why Ruskin was such an ardent enemy of restoration. His views strongly influenced William Morris, who is said to have remarked, rather ungenerously, on a visit to the Parisian cathedral during this very period of its reconstruction that in the end "Notre-Dame would be a miserable thing to look at."[39]

If one thing, however, united Ruskin with Viollet-le-Duc, it was their belief in even the most humble artisan's scrupulous attention to nature. The famous distinction between "noble" and "ignoble" grotesque might indeed be a description of Pyanet's superb attention to the animal real. "It is not as the creating but as the seeing

man, that we are here contemplating the master of the true grotesque. It is because the dreadfulness of the universe around him weighs upon his heart, that his work is wild; and therefore through the whole of it we shall find the evidence of deep insight into nature. His beasts and birds, however monstrous, will have profound relations with the true. He may be an ignorant man and little acquainted with the laws of nature; he is certainly a busy man, and has not much time to watch nature; but he never saw a serpent cross his path, nor a bird flit across the sky, nor a lizard bask upon a stone, without learning so much of the sublimity and inner nature of each."[40] The architect of Notre-Dame had a similar idealistic view of the pedagogical processes of vision, expressed most profoundly in his *Histoire d'un dessinateur*, which ends, "To see is to understand" (Voir c'est savoir).[41] But this is where the similarity ends, for the English writer had a much darker, and ultimately far more radical, view of the strange in Gothic sculpture than did his more optimistic French counterpart. For Ruskin all grotesque art was produced by four types of men: "the men who play wisely; who play necessarily; who play inordinately; and who play not at all."[42] The restraint of the true grotesque is "the expression of repose or play of a serious mind," not a frivolous one. For this reason the medieval carver was not a "free spirit" able to express himself in his work, but someone continually restrained by the fear of sin, death, and eternal judgment.

> When he returns to his idle work—it may be to gild the letters upon the page, or to carve the timbers of the chamber, or the stones of the pinnacle—he cannot give his strength of thought any more to the woe or to the danger, there is a shadow of them still present with him: and as the bright colors mingle beneath his touch, and the fair leaves and flowers grow at his bidding, strange horrors and phantasms rise by their side; grisly beasts and venomous serpents, and spectral fiends and nameless inconsistencies of ghastly life, rising out of things most beautiful, and fading back into them again. . . . The grotesque which we are examining arises out of that condition of mind which appears to follow naturally upon the contemplation of death. . . . First born from the dusty and dreadful whiteness of the charnel house, but softened in their forms by the holiest of human affections, went forth the troop of wild and wonderful images, seen through tears, that had the mastery over our Northern hearts for so many ages.[43]

This discussion of the morbid aspect to the grotesque reveals more about nineteenth-century anxieties than medieval ones, but at least it attempts to understand the more painful aspects of making medieval architecture. Ruskin was profoundly aware of "the presence of death itself, doing its daily work in the chambers of sickness and sin, and waiting for its hour in the fortalices of strength and the high places of pleasure."[44]

It is also relevant for the carving of the chimeras in the construction yard at Notre-Dame. For there, too, death was ever present.

On 16 June 1848, the *Journal des travaux* carefully records the death of a young "garçon maçon" who had "fallen from the high scaffolding between the two towers." Premature deaths were frequent due to the hard life of the masons, who lived in insalubrious conditions on the Île-de-la-Cité and whose working days were long and dangerous.[45] On 30 August 1853 Adolphe Ouvrier, "charpentier," was injured lifting the goat chimera that had been completed on that day (fig. 64). In December 1862, the journal coldly describes, as though it were another crocket put in place, the death of another mason named Chrétien, who had fallen from the scaffolding. A later entry records that his widow was given five hundred francs—the price of a couple of chimeras. On 12 April 1848 "*l'ouvrier* Félix Deberle broke an arm in the fall of a capital," and on 14 October 1849 one of the more elevated class of worker, a "tailleur de pierre" called Ferry, died at the hospital right next to the building-site, the Hôtel-Dieu, having fallen on 4 October. In total, during the entire restoration of the cathedral there were thirty-eight work-related accidents, of which eleven were fatal.[46] In addition, there is the ominous entry for 19 April 1849 of "the death of a roofer from cholera." On 7 May two masons were struck with the disease even as they worked and were rushed to the nearby Hôtel-Dieu. This also reminds us that in the nineteenth century Notre-Dame was in the midst of the worst slums of the city, which fed the epidemic. The *Journal* is filled with obituaries of men who are less anonymous than these workmen because they have the status of artists of individual works, such as that added in the margin in October 1849, recording the death by natural causes of M. Miraunde, "statuaire," and "author" of the statue of Saint James Major on the central portal.

The demise of the carver of the chimeras does not appear in the *Journal des travaux*, but it is announced by Viollet-le-Duc himself in a letter sent from Paris on 13 October 1860, now in the files on the restorations undertaken at the Church of Poissy (Yvelines). In his wonderfully fluid and yet controlled hand, the architect writes to the local authorities that "Monsieur Pyanet, charged with executing the sculptural work at the church, died last spring."[47] He was sixty-four years old. It is significant that among the drawings in the "sculptor's album" are a group of drawings by Viollet-le-Duc dated 1850–53 for gargoyles for this very church, suggesting even more strongly that this was an album of drawings once in Pyanet's possession. At the very beginning of the restoration project both architects had described how difficult it was for any modern sculptor to "rediscover at the end of his chisel, this naïveté of past centuries."[48] In Pyanet they found the perfect sculptor who could transcribe their ideas into three dimensions, a being so anonymous, hardworking, and self-effacing that he was forgotten.

Memory, especially in French culture, is not so much kept in a place, a "lieu de mémoire," but in a text. We know of Pyanet's role in the restoration only through the scrupulous accounting of the project. Viollet-le-Duc himself would inspire later generations of architects, less through his buildings and restorations than through his voluminous writings. His *Dictionnaire* took nearly as long as the cathedral to complete (1854–68), and in ten volumes totaling five thousand pages with 3,367 illustrations integrated into the text, it remains his greatest monument, built out of words rather than stones. A recent three-volume paperback edition has, on the outer edge of each volume, three identical photographs of one of the great chimeras—the dragon with bent arms (no. 18)—as the very emblem of his creativity (fig. 71). It is as if the three repeated dragons define the logic, order, and coherence of his own summa, not carved in stone but printed on paper, the gargoyles guarding his own textual cathedral. This is perhaps not surprising because in many ways the origins of the chimeras can be sought in the pages of yet another influential and earlier book—which is the subject of the next chapter.

71. Slipcase and bindings of new 1997, three-volume paperback edition of Viollet-le-Duc's *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture*. (Photo: Stuart Michaels.)

3. Monsters of Romanticism

THE GARGOYLES OF VICTOR HUGO

The visionary experience arises from the black-and-white surface of printed signs, from the closed and dusty volume that opens with a flight of forgotten words.

MICHEL FOUCAULT, *"Fantasia of the Library"* [1]

When, in their 1843 prospectus, Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc described how restorations can be more disastrous for a monument than the ravages of time, they were quoting almost directly from Victor Hugo's novel *Notre-Dame de Paris*, one of the most important publications of the day.

Hugo's 1831 novel not only made its author the most famous writer of the century, it also helped stimulate widespread interest in the indignities heaped upon Gothic monuments and, by focusing attention on Notre-Dame in particular, helped propel the government of the July Monarchy to fund its restoration.[2] Hugo was also to become a member of the three-person subcommittee of the Comité des arts et monuments that was called upon to evaluate Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc's 1845 revised plan. By this date the novelist had become so identified with the cathedral as to become indistinguishable from it. Early caricatures show "Hugoth," his enormous head emerging from a Gothic arch; his giant form is shown draped over the facade as though it were his throne, and in another caricature he wears the twin-towered cathedral like a top hat.[3] But the monstrous combination of Victor Hugo the writer and the stones of the medieval edifice can be taken even further. It will be my argument here that Hugo's work had a shaping influence, not only upon the initial decision to restore the cathedral but also upon the very forms which that restoration took, most noticeably in the creation of the chimeras of the balustrade.

In his *La Bande noire* of 1824, Hugo had already decried the practice of buying old castles and abbeys in order to sell the stones, in an ode that described the medieval past as an arena of fervid fantasy: "O walls! O battlements! O turrets!" he exclaims. "Dusty cloisters, ancient rooms, / Where holy hymns moaned, / Where joyous banquets laughed! / Places where the heart puts its fantasies!" The term he uses for the notion of fantasy is, significantly, "chimeras" (ses chimères).[4] This association between imaginative fantasy and personal creativity continued to animate his view

of Gothic as a style of thought. One could argue that, beyond the chimeras, which are the direct descendants of Quasimodo and his stone friends, the west facade of the cathedral as we see it today is more a monument to a great fiction that was Victor Hugo's than to anything originating in the Middle Ages.

Produced from the pen of the artist/architect and the chisel of the sculptor, the restored Notre-Dame was intricately connected to other forms of visual media developed in the nineteenth century—the mass-produced illustrated literature of novels and periodicals that were aimed at the new reading public who were ready to read the cathedral anew in light of Victor Hugo's novel.[5] Ultimately, both restoration and printed texts and images served to re-create the cathedral, keeping it alive for subsequent generations, even though Hugo described it as a dead thing: "For those who know Quasimodo actually existed, Notre-Dame is today deserted, inanimate, dead. Something you feel has gone from it. That vast body is empty; it is a skeleton; and all you can see is where it was. It is like a skull which still has holes for the eyes but no eyes to look through them."

Viollet-le-Duc, surely inspired by this passage, not only gave Notre-Dame back its soul in the monstrous Quasimodal chimeras imagined by Victor Hugo; he also gave these beasts "with jaws agape" eyes to see with and thus restored to the cathedral its own vision, its own way of seeing.

1 · *Quasimodo's Grimace and the Craze for Gargoyles*

The facade of Notre-Dame has often been described in terms of a human face. During government debates leading up to the restoration Pierre Dessauret, the director of the Administration des cultes, talked about returning the cathedral to its "primitive physiognomie."[6] Yet the new countenance that it was to present in Viollet-le-Duc's radical restoration, at least at the balustrade level, was not one of youth and beauty in the conventional sense. Notre-Dame rediscovered its face in the form of the deformed and disgusting visage of Quasimodo. This bursts into view during the face-pulling contest that opens chapter 5, entitled "Quasimodo." It demonstrates that Hugo was as fascinated with the ugly as he was with the beautiful, and with their juxtaposition. Contestants "stick their heads out through a round hole in the stonework of the pretty rose window above the door, where the glass had been broken." After a series of droll but undistinguished heads a thunder of applause suddenly breaks out. Hugo provides a spectacular description:

> And the grimace just then lighting up the hole in the rose window was wonderful indeed. After all the pentagonal, hexagonal and unclassifiable faces that had succeeded each other at the window without realizing the ideal of grotesqueness formed by imagi-

72. Tony Johannot, Quasimodo's Gothic grimace. Cover for the first edition of Victor Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris* (Paris: C. Gosselin, 1831). (Photo: author.)

> nations over-excited by the rout, it took all of this sublime grimace, that had just dazzled the throng, to decide the voting. . . . We shall not try to give the reader any idea of that tetrahedral nose, of that horseshoe mouth, of the tiny left eye, obstructed by a bushy red eyebrow, while the right eye had vanished entirely beneath an enormous wen, of those irregular teeth, notched here and there like castle battlements, of that horny lip on which a tooth encroached like an elephant's tusk, of that cleft chin, and above all of the facial expression itself, with its crowning mixture of malice, astonishment and sadness. In all, a sight for you to imagine, if you can.[7]

The horrific face which the crowd immediately recognizes as belonging to "Quasimodo the bell-ringer. . . . Quasimodo, the hunchback of Notre-Dame," is here and then throughout the novel associated with the cragged architectural physiognomy of the cathedral. Many of the subsequent editions of the novel make the twin-towered facade the central vignette opening the book, but the very first edition of 1831 (which did not contain Hugo's extended meditations on Gothic architecture) focuses on this face as it shows itself at this moment in all its monstrosity (fig. 72). The dense wiry

73. Louis Henri de Rudder, Quasimodo's Gothic grimace. From Victor Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris* (Paris: Perrotin, Garnier Frères, 1844), p. 45. (Photo: Jean-Loup Charmet.)

lines of Tony Johannot's superbly dark design almost efface the detail of horror in place of the inky blackness, the battle between light and darkness which is one of the main themes of the novel.

The full-page illustration in the 1844 Perrotin, Garnier edition presents the whole scene with Quasimodo's head emerging from the opening like that of a gargoyle, to the delight and horror of the spectators (fig. 73). Charles Nodier had once described "the demon ogee," and here that architectural form has been animated by the ugliness of Quasimodo.[8] Hugo later compared the cathedral's facade to a face: "Gothic architecture is today disfigured by three sorts of devastation. The wrinkles and warts on its skin are the work of time; the acts of violence, the brutalities, bruises and fractures, the work of revolutions, from Luther to Mirabeau. The mutilations, amputations and dislocations of its limbs, the *restorations*, are the Greek, Roman and barbarian work of the professors, following Vitruvius and Vignolo."[9] The eighteenth century had seen the monstrous as a deformation, almost a disease. Critics railed against chimeras, centaurs, and monsters, which ought to be removed like warts and corns on a body. By contrast, Hugo made monstrosity not only the aesthetic paradigm for many of his characters but also a form of thought.

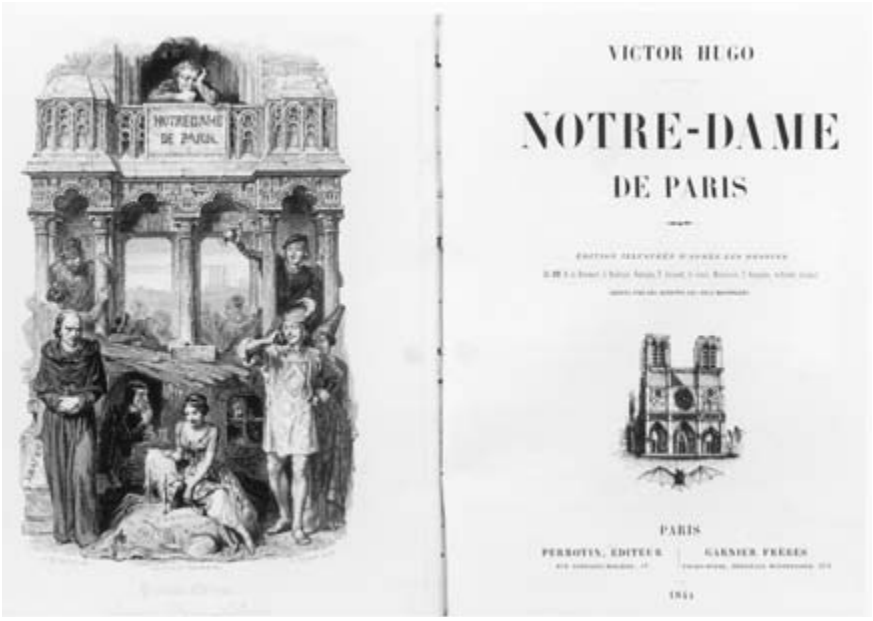
Throughout the story, this deformed child raised in the cathedral's shadow is seen as merging to become part of it: "So it was that, little by little, developing always in harmony with the cathedral, living in it, sleeping in it, hardly ever leaving it, subject day in and day out to its mysterious pressure, he came to resemble it, to be incrusted on it, as it were, to form an integral part of it."[10] This begins with the grimacing contest where his face seems to emerge from the stone oculus but continues in the description of how, as the primal beholder of the sculptures of the cathedral, he is physically shaped by their grotesqueness so as to become like them: "And now he turned his face towards men only reluctantly. His cathedral sufficed him. It was peopled by marble figures, kings, saints and bishops, who at least did not burst out laughing in his face, but only stared down at him quietly and kindly. The other statues, the ones of monsters and demons, felt no hatred for Quasimodo. He resembled them too closely for that. Rather they mocked other men."[11] Toward the end of the novel, just before he rescues the Gypsy

Esmeralda from the hangman, Quasimodo camouflages himself against the statues, "his face so deformed that, but for his half-red, half-mauve tunic, he might have been mistaken for one of the stone monsters through whose jaws the long gutters of the cathedral had been disgorging these past six hundred years."[12] He represents the cathedral's soul, although it is his deformed body that rings its bell and brings it to life. In many caste or class systems it is the despised and rejected outcast who is often assigned the role of representing the whole of humanity: the lowest represent the human total. Something of the same urge to universalize is visible in Hugo's creation of Quasimodo, and, by analogy, those same grotesque sculpted elements of the great building become the most redolent of its whole structure. How he becomes part of the structure of the western facade is suggested in one particularly powerful description of him scaling its clifflike surface.

> One minute they would be alarmed to see a strange dwarf on the very top of one of the towers, climbing, wriggling, crawling on all fours, descending the outside above the void, leaping from projection to projection, rummaging about in the belly of some sculpted gorgon; this was Quasimodo dislodging some rooks. The next minute, in some dim corner of the church, they would come across a sort of living chimera, squatting sullenly down; this was Quaisimodo thinking. . . . At such times, said the local women, the whole church somehow acquired a fantastic, supernatural and terrifying quality; here or there, an eye or a mouth would come open; the dogs and the serpents and the other stone grotesques which kept watch night and day around the monstrous cathedral were heard to bay, with necks outstretched and jaws agape. . . . And all this was Quasimodo's doing. Egypt would have taken him for the god of the temple; the Middle Ages believed he was its demon; in fact he was its soul.[13]

The way in which Quasimodo came to be identified with the open mouths of stone gargoyles was exploited by a number of illustrators. Especially important for our concerns here is that he is often represented leaning out on the parapet, which in the 1830s and 1840s of course had no chimeras or gargoyles.

This is the case in the elaborate frontispiece to the 1844 Perrotin, Garnier edition, where Quasimodo gazes down from a balustrade upon the characters of the story, the perverse archdeacon Frollo, Esmeralda with her goat in the middle, and the noble hero Phoebus on the right (fig. 74). The hunchback is marginalized beyond normal society, represented below by the three orders of society with the clergy and nobility flanking the third estate. Quasimodo even exhibits a melancholy pose rather like that of the most famous of the demons later designed by Viollet-le-Duc. But by 1844, the year that preparations were underway to restore the cathedral to something differ-

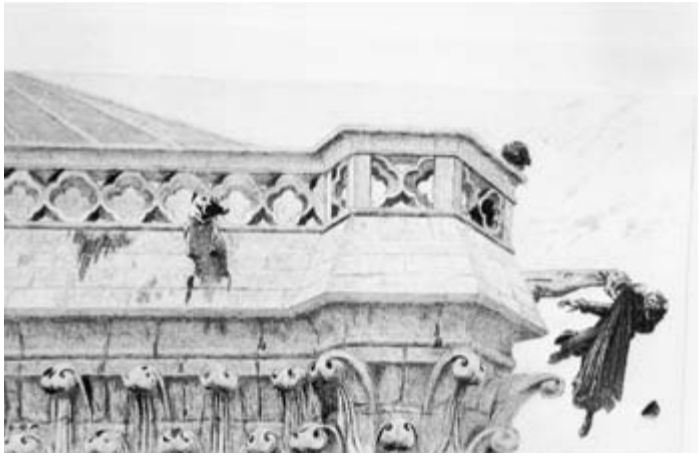


74. François-Joseph-Aimé de Lemud, frontispiece, and Charles-François Daubigny, title-page vignette. From Victor Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris* (Paris: Perrotin, Garnier Frères, 1844). (Photo: Jean-Loup Charmet.)

ent, the building itself had superseded these human forms as the main actor in the drama. This is shown by the vignette, designed by Charles-François Daubigny, that appears on the title page, which depicts Notre-Dame "en miniature" in its unrestored state, with no statues in the gallery of kings and no chimeras. Only the tiny bat placed below provides a monstrous margin. Everything monstrous was at this date confined to the text, since the illustrators, in trying to be accurate about the cathedral, had no chimeras or gargoyles to provide a dramatic backdrop to events.

An actual gargoyle plays a crucial role at the novel's end, when Quasimodo and Frollo battle it out above the city. "Beyond the balustrade of the tower, exactly underneath the point where the priest had stopped, was one of those fantastically carved stone waterspouts which bristle on Gothic buildings; in one of its crevices two pretty gillyflowers had blossomed, and as they shook and seemed to come alive in the passing breeze, they bowed to one another playfully."[14] The evil priest Frollo, who has been thrown over the parapet of one of the towers, grasps at a stone creature in order to save himself from plunging to his death. In François-Joseph-Aimé de Lemud's full-page illustration for the 1844 edition there is not a gargoyle in sight, even to break under Frollo's fingers, and he falls through a monsterless mass of architecture (fig. 75). The only monster, the only creature peering over the edge, is Quasimodo, whose

75. François-Joseph-Aimé de Lemud, Frollo thrown by Quasimodo from a gargoyle-less tower. From Victor Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris* (Paris: Perrotin, 1844). (Photo: Jean-Loup Charmet.)



76. Olivier Merson, Frollo dangling on a gargoyle. From Victor Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris* (Paris: Édition nationale, Testard, 1889). (Photo: author.)

posture is exactly that of the chimeras. Of course, this takes place on the towers, whereas the chimeras will later be placed on the lower balustrade, but it nonetheless provides a visual model for their uncanny presence. Olivier Merson's engraving in a much later edition, of 1889, shows Frollo hanging off one of the newly restored "grandes gargouilles" designed and placed there by Viollet-le-Duc (fig. 76).

It has been suggested that the central character in Hugo's novel is the cathedral itself. But one might also argue that, of the entire population carved in stone, it is not the saints but the gargoyles who are the most spectacular. Hugo describes them brilliantly, fascinated by their uncanny effect. As things immobile that also magically seem to move, they blurred the barrier between the living and the dead. Hugo's description of how "an eye or a mouth would come open" and the stones come to life "with necks outstretched and jaws agape" are not descriptions *of* the chimeras, which, we must remember, did not exist in 1831, but prescriptions *for* their later placement and for the numerous animal mouths that the restorers added to the towers. This is one of the passages that seems directly related to what Viollet-le-Duc imagined for

the cathedral, following to the letter the notion of strangely animated, gaping beasts that "keep watch" as guardians of the sacred space.

Far from seeing gargoyles as components of a drainage system, which, as we know, was Viollet-le-Duc's view, Hugo bestowed upon them an uncanny almost-aliveness. Although he helped to fuel the gargoyle craze that was to flourish well into the middle of the century, the fad was actually part of a much larger and more general fascination with the fantastic and the grotesque. Aloysius Bertrand's *Gaspard de la nuit*, written before Hugo's novel but not published until 1842, is full of descriptions of gargoyles even though the author does not designate them as such. During the author's inspection of Dijon Cathedral, "a burst of laughter made itself heard above, and I saw at the corner of the Gothic edifice one of those monstrous figures which the sculptors of the Middle Ages attached by their elbows to the gutters of the cathedrals, an atrocious damned figure who, plagued by suffering, stuck out its tongue, ground its teeth and wrung its hands—The figure of stone had laughed . . . laughed with a grimacing smile, frightening, infernal, but at the same time sarcastic, incisive, picturesque."[15] Elsewhere a medieval mason beholds his handiwork: "stone dragons [*les tarasques de pierre*] that vomit water from the roofs into the abyss." Bertrand even supplied a list of things he wanted to illustrate his phantasmagoric text, including "gibbets," "ogives," and "girouettes gothiques," but the word "gargouille" never appears in his lists of gothic paraphernalia, suggesting that the term had not yet come into general use.

Willibald Sauerländer has remarked that it was "no coincidence that the nineteenth century first credited gothic sculpture with intrinsic aesthetic value in a field for which the classical canon laid down no rules: the field of the grotesque. It was the drolls and gargoyles that first attracted attention, not the jamb figures."[16] Already in his preface to *Cromwell* (1837) Hugo had described "innumerable forms" of grotesquery that decorate medieval buildings—"its monsters, its mastiffs, its demons around the capitals, along friezes and under the roofs."[17] Here he argues that it is "la génie moderne" which has conserved these supernatural myths, but which has imprinted them with a more striking character, making giants into dwarves and substituting for the classical Hydra "all the local dragons of our legends—the *Gargouille* of Rouen, the *Gra-Ouilli* of Metz." This replacement of generalized classical myths with local legends is part of the growing link between Gothic and national identity that would also stimulate Viollet-le-Duc. In 1837 Hugo's friend the artist Louis Boulanger exhibited a painting at the Salon that portrayed the procession of an effigy of the local dragon, or "Gargouille," around the city of Rouen. While this recovery of traditions points to some of the ways in which gargoyles had originally functioned as symbols of communal exorcism and even pride, what is most significant here is how, at Notre-Dame,

the monsters are stripped of their legendary associations. If they are associated with *any* story at all, it is not that of an early Christian bishop driving demons from the sacred precinct (stories closely related to the cleansing of the water supply), but, rather, Victor Hugo's lurid tale told in 1831.

Hugo's novel was crucial to the development of a popular taste for Gothic gargoyles. When Viollet-le-Duc came to restore the cathedral of Notre-Dame, he added many more gargoyles than had been there previously. This flew in the face of neoclassical aesthetics and Johann Joachim Winckelmann's influential history of sculpture. Aubin Louis Millin in his *Dictionnaire des beaux-arts* (1806) had called such sculptures on Gothic cathedrals "indecents et ridicules."[18] They were also often described as grotesque, a term invented in the Renaissance for certain rediscovered classical decorations, which became a crucial category in romantic visual as well as literary culture.[19] Among Viollet-le-Duc's most beautiful drawings, as we have seen, are those for gargoyles, which he described in his *Dictionnaire* not as grotesque aberrations but as "masterpieces." "The variety of forms given to gargoyles is prodigious; we do not know two that are alike in the whole of France. Many are masterpieces of sculpture; it is a world of animals and people composed with such living energy, boldly carved by bold and sure hands."[20]

One reviewer of the restoration described how suprisingly well the architects had managed to "identify with the Gothic style, even in its most most startling and grotesque fantasies." He related how the old gutters, which had given the monument "a certain bourgeois physiognomy," have been replaced by "nice old gargoyles with the heads of chimeras, hydras, *guivres*, and *tarasques*, which boldly spill their water on the heads of passersby, in great defiance of the roads department and Monsieur the Chief of Police. But what are a few collapsed umbrellas and a few chance baptisms in order to give back Notre-Dame her primordial physiognomy?"[21] Gargoyles had become the crucial grotesque components of the cathedral's Gothic face-lift.

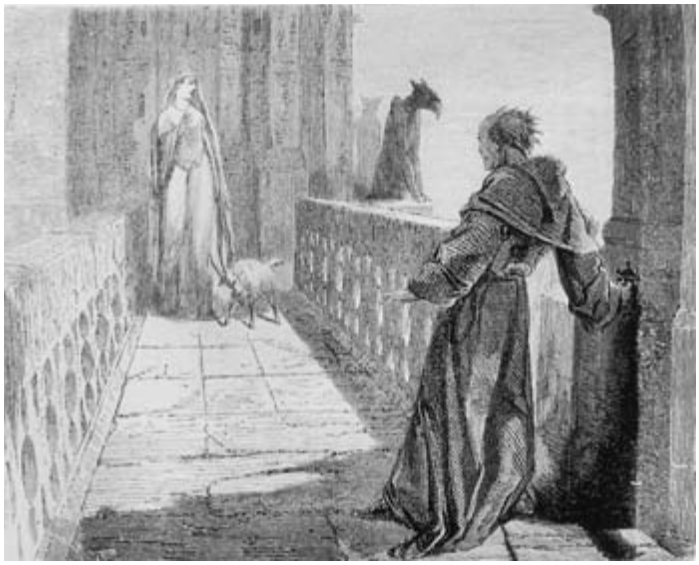
Gargoyles became fashionable even as humorous objects during the 1840s. They appear in the context of other romantic novels as signs of a particular social status. The best example of this is Louis Reybaud's *Jérôme Paturot à la recherche d'une position sociale* (1842)—a brilliant satire on the social climbers of the July Monarchy and their Hugo-inspired romantic pretentions. Paturot in his climb to social power seeks to build himself a "Maison Moyen Âge" for his Paris residence. This shows that at the very moment the restoration of Notre-Dame was begun, the idea of going back to the Middle Ages had wider social ramifications. On one hand, it could be seen as politically progressive, following Hugo, but one could just as easily associate the Gothic with the feudal prerevolutionary age of the monarchists and, as Jérôme Paturot shows, with the aping of aristocratic fashion by the crass and tasteless nou-

veaux riches. "My great affair, then, was the construction of a house of the Gothic type, which was built under the orders of the hairiest architect of the capital. This was a young man drunk on the past and who looked less like a Frenchman of the nineteenth century than an Epimedides of the Middle Ages."[22]

In a hilarious scene the romantically bearded young architect presents his plans to Paturot and his wife and asks them to choose their Gothic: "Do you want your lanceted Gothic, rayonnant, or flamboyant?" (Voulez-vous le gothique à lancettes, le rayonnant ou le flamboyant?), as though medieval styles could be picked like items at one of the new Parisian stores. The couple decide on flamboyant as the most "ornate and susceptible to exterior decoration." Beyond the usual ogives, the architect suggests that the facade be outfitted with "some spy holes from which one might direct things" and a "sarbacane," or hollow tube for projecting missiles against thieves, louts, and weavers. "It will be advantageous in times of trouble."[23] These architectural elements that keep out the riffraff suggest a prevailing notion of Gothic as an antidemocratic style. When the "Maison Moyen Âge" is finally completed, it is a "pastiche in the poorest taste," even though the scruffy architect is in raptures over its pointiness, proclaiming it to be "better than the originals." Paturot complains that the ugly, uncomfortable house has cost him six hundred thousand francs. The novel's illustrator was the great Jean-Ignace-Isidore-Gérard Grandville (1803–47), always the anthropomorphizer, always seeing the uncanny living quality of the inanimate, who has the house piss on its pretentious owner (fig. 77). Hugo's novel did in fact inspire a certain mode of bourgeois architecture which sought to incorporate the demonic monstrous as a kind of safely distanced uncanny. In the sixth arrondissement of Paris, at 26 rue Gay-Lussac, crouching demonic figures loom above the street in a witty "hugolien" cornice (fig. 78).[24]

77. Jean-Ignace-Isidore-Gérard Grandville, "La Maison Moyen-Âge." From Louis Reybaud, *Jérôme Paturot à la recherche d'une position sociale* (Paris: Hetzel, 1842), p. 370. (Photo: BNF.)

78. Atlantes Hugo-style, 26 rue Gay-Lussac, Paris 6e (architect E. Seitz 1868). (Photo: author.)



79. Jean-Antoine-Valentin Foulquier, "Apparition." From Victor Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris* (Paris: Hughes, 1877), p. 169. (Photo: author.)

80. Olivier Merson, "Three Men's Hearts Differently Formed." From Victor Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris* (Paris, Édition nationale, Testard, 1889). (Photo: author.)

To return to *Notre-Dame de Paris*, it is remarkable that such was the authority of the restoration that when a new illustrated edition of the novel was published in 1877, the cathedral appeared in the guise of the newly restored building and Viollet-le-Duc even provided some of the illustrations. There is a scene in book 9 which takes place on the balustrade. It is where the feverish and obsessed priest Frollo has climbed and sees Esmeralda, whom Quasimodo has been hiding there: "a whitenes, a shape, a woman, at the opposite corner of the tower."[25] This full-page illustration, titled "Apparition" by Jean-Antoine-Valentin Foulquier, also presents us with the ghostly outlines of two of Viollet-le-Duc's chimeras (fig. 79). Even more carefully observed depictions of the chimeras appear in Olivier Merson's illustration of an earlier moment in the novel, where Quasimodo has saved the Gypsy from execution and climbs with her limp, fainted body up to the balustrade. Prominent in the foreground is the goat chimera (no. 33; fig. 80). Of course, the goat is a traditional denizen of hell and represents the devil and, horned and hoofed, is also associated with sexual excess. In the novel it is Esmeralda's pet goat Djali which embroils its mistress in accusations

of witchcraft but which illustrators enjoyed depicting as her intimate, their animal and human bodies often shown sensuously intertwined. Hugo's novel would affect how people saw the cathedral in the future. According to Augustin Challamel's *Souvenirs d'un hugolâtre: La Génération de 1830* "effectively no one could pass in front of the cathedral without peopling it, its imposing towers with their imagination—without dreaming of Claude and Jehan Frollo, of Quasimodo and Esmeralda."[26] One of the earliest and most inventive of those dreamers was Viollet-le-Duc, who in imagining the chimeras of the balustrade could not resist bringing Quasimodo, Esmeralda, and Djali to life in stone.

II · *The Book Will Kill the Building*

"And opening the window of the cell, he pointed to the immense church of Notre-Dame, whose black silhouette, with its twin towers, its ribs of stone and its monstrous cruppers, stood out against the starlit sky like an enormous two-headed sphinx sitting in the midst of the town. The archdeacon contemplated the gigantic cathedral for a time in silence, then he sighed and stretched out his right hand towards the printed book lying open on his table and his left hand towards Notre-Dame, and looked sadly from the book to the church: 'Alas,' he said, 'this will kill that.'"[27]

The vignette that opens chapter 2 of book 5 of *Notre-Dame de Paris* in the lavishly illustrated 1877 edition seems to show the word obliterating Notre-Dame (fig. 81). This image appears in a printed book which also re-creates or replaces the cathedral with the word. On closer inspection, however, this is not an image of the printed book in its ruled lines stamping out the towers of Notre-Dame but a medieval handwritten manuscript which seems to call up their equivalence as shining glory. Hugo is aware that he is interrupting the flow of the story at this point to introduce this polemical tract: "Our female readers will forgive us if we pause for a moment in order to see what the thought might be that lay concealed beneath the archdeacon's enigmatic words 'This will kill that. The book will kill the building.'"[28] What he goes on to explain is his important theory of decline of Western architecture in modernity. "Thus, up until Gutenberg, architecture was the chief, the universal form of writing. . . . Architecture was the principle register of mankind. . . . All ideas of any complexity which arose in the world became a building. . . . In the fifteenth century everything changed. The human mind discovered a means of perpetuating itself which was not only more lasting and resistant than architecture, but also simpler and easier. Architecture was dethroned. The lead characters of Gutenberg succeeded the stone characters of Orpheus. *The book was to kill the building*."[29]

That Hugo was constructing a cathedral and not just a book is evident from the

81. H. Scott, "This Will Kill That." From Victor Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris* (Paris: Hughes, 1877), p. 227. (Photo: author.)

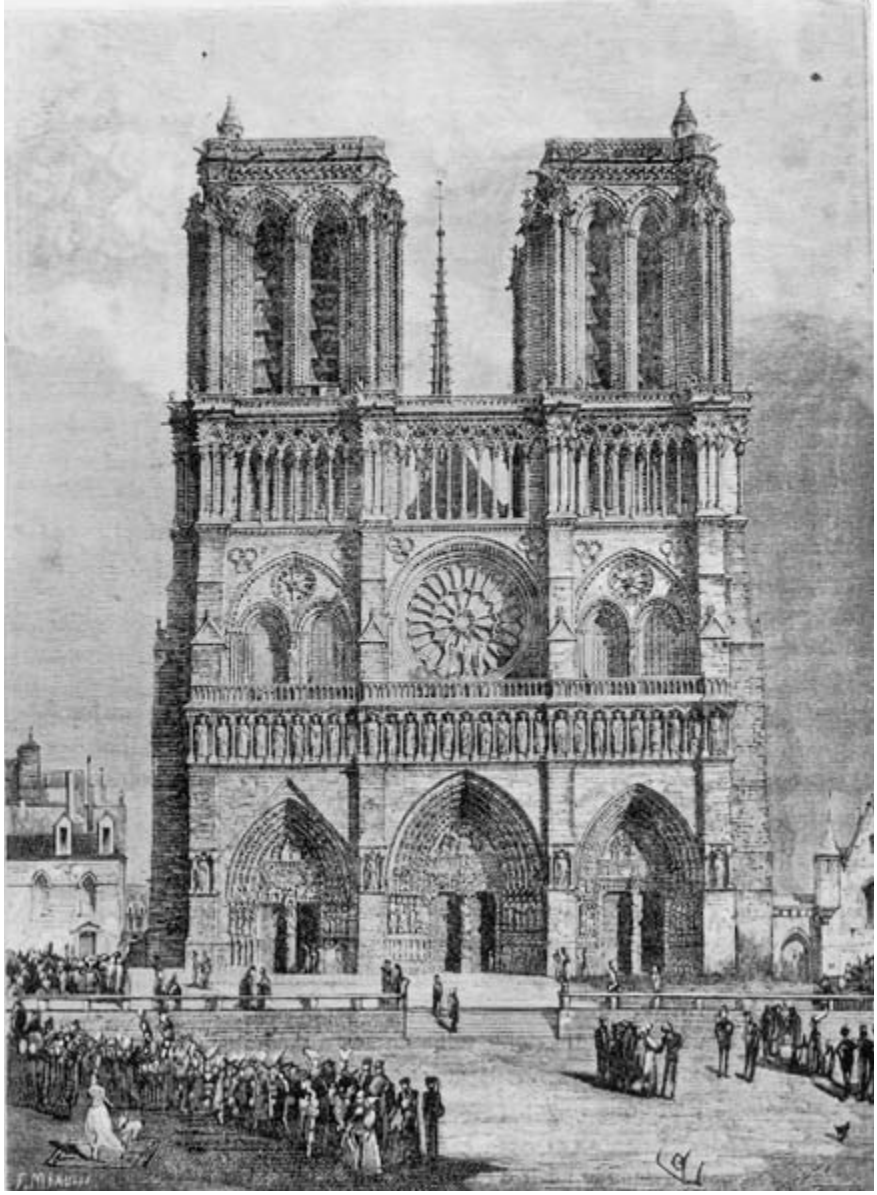
complex genesis of the novel but also from the changes and additions which were made to the first edition and which made the cathedral its central character. In December 1832 the novel appeared in its eighth definitive edition, to which Hugo added a prefatory note and three additional chapters, including "This Will Kill That" and "A Bird's-Eye View of Paris." In the new preface Hugo explains that these additional chapters are not new but "were written at the same time as the rest of the work." His explanation, which has always struck commentators as dubious, was that he had not previously included them because they had been lost. Whatever his motives, the novel changed its shape and took on the ponderous visionary tone of the polemical tract. The theory of the relationship between the printing press and architecture had been on Hugo's mind for some time. Montalembert, another member of the Comité des arts et monuments, recalled that after a meeting of 16 July 1830 Hugo had given him a two-hour lecture on architecture as the expression of "intellectual liberty before the invention of printing" and its demise "after the invention of the press."[30] For Hugo the written word now held sway. Only this could carry the freedom of thought crucial to the postmedieval world. For the young Hugo, who up until 1830 had been a conservative monarchist, the Gothic cathedral was one of the tools he used in refashioning his new radical self. Architecture in the Middle Ages was able to express man's thoughts and desires, but with the onset of the Renaissance, academicization and rationality killed architecture, making it no longer a vehicle for mass expression and relinquishing that power to the printed word. "Each race wrote, in passing, its line in the book; it struck out the old Romanesque hieroglyphs on the

frontispieces of the cathedrals, and now the dogma was all but lost to view, except where it showed through the new symbolism laid on top of it."[31] For Hugo this new symbolism was freedom.

> Romanesque architecture died. . . . From now on, the cathedral itself, formerly so dogmatic an edifice, was invaded by the bourgeoisie, by the commons, by liberty; it escaped from the priest and came under the sway of the artist. The artist built to his own fancy. Farewell mystery, myth and law. Now it was fantasy and caprice. . . . The book of architecture no longer belonged to the priesthood, to religion and to Rome; it belonged to the imagination, to poetry and to the people. . . . Now architects took unimaginable liberties, even towards the Church. Monks and nuns coupled shamefully on capitals, as in the Hall of Chimneys in the Palais de Justice in Paris. The story of Noah was carved *in full*, as beneath the great portal of Bourges. A bacchic monk with asses' ears and glass in hand laughed a whole community to scorn, as above the lavabo in the Abbey of Boscherville. At that time, the thought that was inscribed in stone enjoyed a privilege entirely comparable to our present freedom of the press. This was the freedom of architecture.[32]

It was this passage that inspired Jules Michelet to write in a similar vein in *The History of France* and to admit that Hugo had said all there was to say on the cathedral: "By the side of the ancient cathedral he has reared another cathedral of poetry, as firm as its foundations, as lofty as its towers."[33] This too was the message that Viollet-le-Duc took to heart in his notion of the Gothic cathedral as representing a kind of "freedom of the press."

It was an open book, not a closed one, which is why the chimeras must be seen as symbols of this newfound freedom of fantasy and not as illustrations of a pseudo-medieval bestiary or encyclopedia. Hugo's notion that "up until Gutenberg, architecture was the chief, the universal form of writing" was to become a tremendously influential metaphor. The success of Émile Mâle's 1898 study *L'Art religieux au XIIIe siècle* has obscured the fact that he was not the inventor of the notion of the cathedral as a book in stone, but before him both Adolphe-Napoléon Didron and Hugo had made this argument.[34] Didron had dedicated his *Manuel d'iconographie* (1845) to Victor Hugo, whom he described not only as a poet and genius capable of resuscitating the past, but as "the father of all archaeologists."[35] But Hugo's romantic and political emphasis on the cathedral as a place of free expression was rejected by Mâle, who as part of the Catholic revival of the fin de siècle saw the cathedral as a dogmatic summa in stone, a closed book. It is important to remember, however, that medieval books bore no titles in the modern sense, had no clear beginnings and endings, and were



82. Viollet-le-Duc, "Notre Dame in 1482." From Victor Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris* (Paris: Hughes, 1877), p. 136. (Photo: author.)

not read as sequential linear narratives from cover to cover. More important still, they were not silent but spoken and often read not by the isolated individual but in groups. What the medieval manuscript often contained was a variety of usually unillustrated heterogeneous texts and compilations, mingling sacred and profane, works by different scribes of varying dates and lacking titles, frontispieces, or, often, covers. In this sense medieval buildings *were* like medieval manuscripts. But they were not like modern books, especially novels, which represent the idea of a totality and closure.[36]

In the case of Hugo's novel and its effect upon the building itself, it is fairer to say that rather than killing the building his own book helped resurrect it. The brand-new cathedral as restored by Viollet-le-Duc, with its spire, its gallery of kings, and its gargoyles and chimeras, is illustrated on page 136 of the 1877 edition. We see a full-page woodcut of "Notre-Dame in 1482" signed by none other than Viollet-le-Duc (fig. 82). Indeed, the very cover of this lavish volume is a chromolithographic gold design by Viollet-le-Duc. This illustration of the cathedral is at odds with Hugo's text, which was written before all these changes were made and which describes the prerestoration, ruinous state of the church. When he replaced late medieval elements with his own versions of what he considered purer thirteenth-century style, Viollet-le-Duc was erasing any idea of historical continuity. In fact, in 1482 the lower fourteenth-century balustrade over the portals, which the restorer removed in favor of a thirteenth-century one, would have been in place. So what he in fact presents us with here is not what the cathedral looked like in 1482 but what he himself had *made it look like* in 1864. An even more blatant example of "restoring" things to their earlier medieval appearance occurs in this edition, which collected the iconography pertaining to Notre-Dame, mixing its most recent refashioning with images like the etchings of Charles Méryon (to be discussed in chap. 6). His famous *Le Stryge* (1853) is here reengraved by M. Méaulle so as to erase the nineteenth-century buildings in the background and replace them with more medieval-looking, half-timbered houses (fig. 83).

Paradoxically, despite Hugo's influence on the younger generation and his position on the Comité des monuments historiques, early on he clearly expresses his antipathy to restoration. In a note added to the definitive edition of 1832, he attacked the restorers, who "cleanse" the past of these peculiar and often "unseemly charms." At a meeting of the Comité des monuments in March 1835 Hugo complained of a planned cleaning of the stones of the cathedral as destroying "the color of the centuries. The only beauty time gives to edifices." He also proclaimed at a later meeting that "there are two ways of destroying a monument, by restoration and by demolition. The second way, which is naive, is preferable to the first, which is absurd."[37] When Viollet-le-Duc wrote of restoring Notre-Dame to its original legibility, he was referring to the book metaphor in Hugo's terms and not in those of the symbolists of the *Annales archéologiques*. It was Hugo's secular vision of the cathedrals, no matter how historically wrong we might know such an interpretation is today, that inspired the restorer to take some of the "unimaginable liberties, even towards the Church" that Hugo described when he said that "a portal, a facade or even an entire church could display a symbolic meaning utterly alien to the cult, or even hostile to the Church."[38] Hugo even described Notre-Dame as a kind of monster: "This central, generative

LE STRYGE

nous autres Parisiens, sur le terrain que nous croyons avoir gagné depuis. Paris, depuis Louis XI, ne s'est pas accru de beaucoup plus d'un tiers. Il a, certes, bien plus perdu en beauté qu'il n'a gagné en grandeur.

Paris est né, comme on sait, dans cette vieille île de la Cité qui a la forme d'un berceau. La grève de cette île fut sa première en-

83. Fortuné-Louis Méaulle, reengraving of Méryon's *Le Stryge*. From Victor Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris* (Paris: Hughes, 1877), p. 149. (Photo: author.)

church is a sort of chimera among the old churches of Paris: it has the head of one, the limbs of another, the cruppers of a third; something of all of them."[39] This monstrous capacity, according to Hugo, resided with the medium of architecture itself: "The symbol needed to expand into a building. Architecture thus evolved along with the human mind; it became a giant with a thousand heads and a thousand arms and fixed all this vacillating symbolism in a form at once palpable and eternal."[40] In his novel this is made clear in the extensive architectural description in the first part of book 3. "But let us return to the facade of Notre-Dame such as it presents itself to us today, when we go devoutly to admire the solemn, mighty and, according to its chroniclers, terrifying cathedral, *quae mole sua terrorem incutit spectantibus*. (Which by its mass fills spectators with terror.)"[41] As well as realizing its power to frighten, Hugo here describes important things that were missing from the cathedral—the jamb figures and statues of the kings as well as the "delightful little spire," which had been amputated "by an architect of taste" in 1787. "On its ruins three kinds of lesion can be seen, all of them affecting it to different depths: time, first of all, which has

imperceptiblty chipped the surface in places and rusted it everywhere; then, political and religious revolutions, blind and wrathful by their very nature, which have dashed against it in a frenzy, rending its rich garment of sculptures and reliefs, bursting in its rose windows, snapping its necklaces of arabesques and figurines, uprooting its statues, some because of their mitres, others because of their crowns; and lastly, the ever more foolish and grotesque fashions which, since the anarchic but magnificent aberrations of the Renaissance, have succeeded one another in the necessary decadence of architecture. Fashions have done more harm than revolutions."[42] Looking at the cathedral drawn and restored by Viollet-le-Duc (fig. 82) it is as though the restorer had read these very words and replied to them in every detail. The chimeras not only are expressions of the fantasy and freedom that Hugo admired in the Middle Ages, but also go toward the reinstatement of that capacity to terrify that his novel had described.

III · *The View from Notre-Dame*

O, who will transport me to some sublime tower
From where the city opens under me like an abyss![43]

Hugo's novel was crucial to the restoration project in another respect. It not only provided Viollet-le-Duc with a cast of chimerical characters for his balustrade; it also made the balustrade and the towers of the cathedral sites of romantic self-projection, spectacular vantage points for the panorama he laid out below. "We have just tried to repair for the reader the admirable church of Notre-Dame of Paris. We have pointed, hurriedly, to most of the beauties which it possessed in the fifteenth century and which it lacks today; but we omitted the chief of these: the view of Paris one then enjoyed from the top of its towers."[44]

Hugo had always been fascinated by the towers and the vantage point they offered. In 1863 Edmond and Jules de Goncourt relate in their journal a nostalgic dinner conversation with Charles-Augustin Saint-Beuve, who called Hugo "a charlatan, a comedian." They are not much kinder themselves, noting how he cracked peach pits with his lynxlike teeth. Beyond his animal-like features they emphasize his eyes. They describe how in his youth, when he had climbed the towers of Notre-Dame nearly every night to watch the sunset, his almost inhuman eagle eyes could make out the color of Madame Nodier's dress as she dined on the balcony of the Arsenal Library.[45]

Whereas church towers and spires in the Middle Ages had served most powerfully to call the faithful to prayer and to draw their devotional gaze heavenward, people

of the nineteenth century preferred to climb up in order to look down.[46] They themselves became godlike in their urge to experience the horizon and the giddy sense of infinity. The identification of a subject position between the chimeras and the gaze of the nineteenth-century observer meant that they too had usurped this all-seeing God's-eye view.

Hugo did not invent this idea. Ever since the eighteenth century cathedrals had been enjoyed less as monuments of medieval architecture than as viewing platforms. Think of Goethe's rapturous ascent of the tower of Strasbourg Cathedral.[47] Guidebooks of the period make a special point of the admirable view from Notre-Dame, but most do not mention any gargoyles, and one describes the portals below as having "a prodigious quantity of large and disordered sculpture representing angels, saints, and patriarchs accompanied by *caprices trés ridicules*," which gives us a sense of the derogatory way in which these sculptures were viewed by the tastes of the previous century. During the 1830s the historian Friedrich von Raumer had surveyed the great city from Hugo's bird's-eye view and thought not of the past but of a future in which only ruins were scattered over the bleak landscape. "Yesterday I surveyed the enormous city from the Notre-Dame tower. Who built the first house, when will the last one collapse and the ground of Paris look like the ground of Thebes and Babylon?"[48] This desolation in a dreamt-of future, mingled with the nostalgia for past decay, is a hallmark of romantic theories of time and the transience of things. It was visually articulated by Hugo in his own visionary drawings and in his novel, which made every reader aware of the difference between the Paris lived in today and that of the past—and future. The eighteenth century had invented the notion of the view, but there was something new and more modern, something more like time travel, about the urban panorama that Hugo and his friends sought from the towers of the old cathedral.

"When, after groping your way lengthily up the gloomy spiral staircase, which rises vertically up through the thick wall of the bell towers, you abruptly emerged at last on to one of the two lofty platforms, flooded with air and daylight, a beautiful panorama unfolded itself simultaneously before you on every side."[49] The panorama that Hugo goes on to describe was not the expanding sprawling Paris of the early nineteenth century, but the city as he imagined it at the end of the Middle Ages. The chapter ends with his lament that "Gothic Paris was complete only for a minute. Hardly had they finished Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie before they began to demolish the old Louvre." He describes present-day Paris as "a collection of specimens from several centuries," and compares it with what he imagines to be "a balloon's eye view of Paris" of the future, which is a checkerboard of lines, a modern grid. Urging his readers to imagine for themselves the "the Gothic profile of old Paris" emerging

out of the present one, he urges, "Take that black silhouette once more, accentuate the innumerable acute angles of its spires and gables with shadow, and make it stand out, more jagged than a shark's jaws, against the copper sky of the sunset. Then, compare."[50] This could describe one of Hugo's own somber, visionary paintings, which are Gothic abstractions, but it also serves to remind us of the differences between Hugo's and Viollet-le-Duc's views of Gothic architecture. The silhouette of the west facade of Notre-Dame including its gargoyles and chimeras was, for the architect, a perfectly defined and controlled mass. For Hugo every outline turns into something else, monstrous and limitless.

One of the most important sources for the stone chimeras of the balustrade is a tiny wood-engraved vignette by Daubigny, produced for the 1844 edition of *Notre-Dame de Paris* (fig. 84). Vignettes have often been described as new spatial metaphors within the illusionary world of the illustrated book, which, as Charles Rosen and Henri Zerner have noted, "by its general appearance, presents itself as both a global metaphor for the world and as a fragment. . . . A vignette is not a window because it has no frame. The image defined from its center rather than its edges, emerges from the paper as an apparition or a fantasy."[51] But it also works within the temporal structure of reading as a stopping point at the end of a chapter, a site for a moment of reflection. This one appears at the end of book 8 when the triumphant Quasimodo saves the Gypsy girl from the clutches of death and looks out from the platform of Notre-Dame. It shows not the hunchback, but a brooding sculpted winged creature perched on a parapet over the abyss. In the 1877 edition this same image is titled "La Chimère." One of the inspirations for Viollet-le-Duc's stone chimeras, this is not an image of any gargoyle or statue from Notre-Dame. Instead, it originates from another of Paris's great medieval ruins. It represents one of the four sculpted evangelist symbols on the top of the Tour Saint-Jacques, which Hugo had described in this very novel as looking like Egyptian sphinxes. Hugo described the tower during his panoramic survey of medieval Paris: "There was the ornate square tower of Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie, its sharp corners blunted by sculptures, admirable even in the fifteenth century though it was not yet finished. It lacked in particular the four monsters who still perch today on the four corners of the roof, looking like four sphinxes setting to the new Paris the riddle of the old; their sculptor, Rault, did not set them up there until 1526, and got twenty francs for his pains."[52] This tower, which was all that remained of the great fifteenth-century Church of Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie, was, along with Notre-Dame, a famous site of nineteenth-century medievalism in Paris (fig. 85). In the midst of Haussmann's demolitions it came to stand as a symbol of the triumphant ruin that remained, having suffered even worse deprecations than Notre-Dame: it had been used as an iron foundry. An early study

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terieur de l'église. Un moment après, il reparut sur la plate-forme supérieure, toujours l'Égyptienne dans ses bras, toujours courant avec folie, toujours criant : — Asile! et la foule applaudissait. Enfin, il fit une troisième apparition sur le sommet de la tour du bourdon ; de là il sembla montrer avec orgueil à toute la ville celle qu'il avait sauvée, et sa voix tonnante, cette voix qu'on entendait si rarement et qu'il n'entendait jamais, répéta trois fois avec frénésie jusque dans les nuages : — Asile! asile! asile!

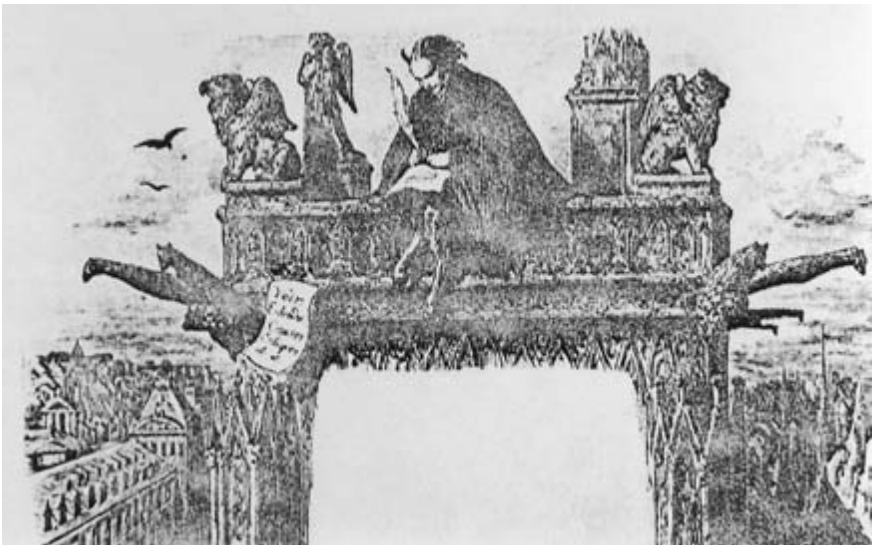
— Noël! Noël! criait le peuple de son côté ; et cette immense acclamation allait donner sur l'autre rive la foule de la Grève, et la recluse qui attendait toujours, l'œil fixé sur le gibet.

84. Charles-François Daubigny, "La Chimère." From Victor Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris* (Paris: Hughes, 1877), p. 152. (Photo: author.)

85. Henri Le Secq, the Tour Saint-Jacques, with restoration of the lower parts underway. Print from paper negative. MAP CNMHS.

of the building, published in 1857, just before its restoration, described how "the Tour Saint-Jacques, today empty and dead from top to bottom, like the vast tube of a chimney, has no other useful purpose today than in its audacity to serve as local decoration or perspective or to serve as an observatory for the curious and idle who from its summit want to contemplate Paris from a bird's-eye view."[53]

These monsters that Hugo described and that Daubigny went up and drew were in fact evangelist symbols, the lion of Saint Mark in this case. Hugo also made a pen and ink drawing of the tower which he sent as a gift to his artist friend Louis Boulanger.[54] This drawing isolates the tower from its situation on the busy rue de Rivoli and sets it in a desolate landscape, like a ruin left on a desert plain after a future holocaust. This image is a premonition of what would later be recorded by photographers like Henri Le Secq in the 1850s, when the tower stood alone amid a heap of rubble during Haussmann's demolitions. Restored by Theodore Ballu between 1853 and 1859, the four weathered sphinx-evangelist symbols were replaced by copies and

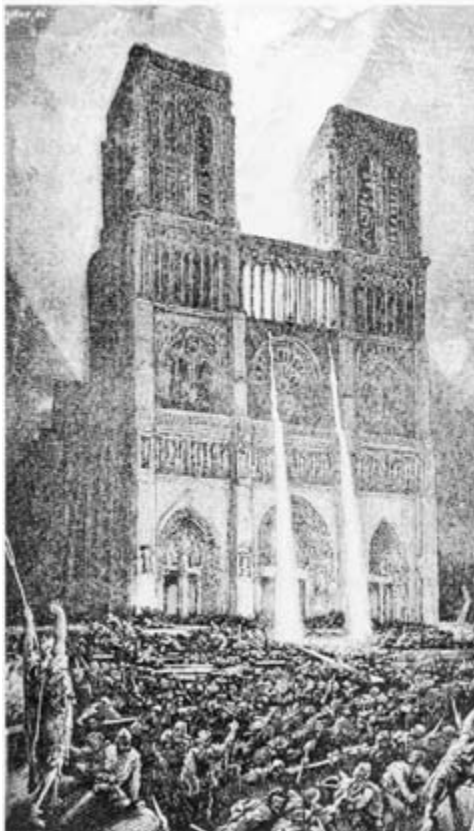


86. Gustave Doré, the demon-critic observing Paris from the Tour Saint-Jacques. Title page of the *Gazette de Paris*, 1856. Wood engraving. (Photo: author.)

the originals taken to the gardens of the Cluny Museum, where they sat until the year 2000. Daubigny was able to get so close to the statue because this monument was, like Notre-Dame, a favorite vantage point for those seeking romantic city views. In 1857 one writer described how "from the height of this tower one sees the course and layout of all the streets, like the veins in a human body."[55] He also notes that in this age "when the novel has become the base of our literature" the Tour Saint-Jacques has, like Notre-Dame, excited the imagination of many writers. In February 1854 the sculptor Pierre Rault, who carved the four evangelist symbols in the early sixteenth century, appeared in a popular serial, in a story culminating in his throwing himself off the top of the tower for love of a merchant's daughter. Two years later, Gustave Doré depicted the same stone beasts in his title-page vignette for the *Gazette de Paris*, giving the tower an interesting demonic twist (fig. 86). A young romantic with horns and goat's feet sits between the evangelist chimeras and the gargoyles, viewing the modern city with the demonic hauteur of the critic. Not only in Méryon's later engraving but already for decades before, the tower had been linked to the cathedral. Daubigny's vignette (fig. 84) also views one monument in old Paris in terms of another, taking his inspiration perhaps from Hugo's very words about the sphinxlike monster on the Tour Saint-Jacques. This stone creature, which looks darkly out into an abyss within the pages of *Notre-Dame de Paris*, becomes the protypical chimera on the restored cathedral.

François-Nicholas Chifflart's famous illustration "Attaque de Notre Dame" embodies Hugo's ability to combine the sublime with the grotesque. It shows the mob storming the building at the novel's climax and the two streams of molten metal pouring down from the balustrade, which becomes Quasimodo's battlemented fortress (fig. 87). The dead stone is brought to life, this time by flickering flame.

> On the summit of the topmost gallery, higher than the central rose-window, a great flame was rising from between the two towers amidst eddying sparks. . . . Below this flame, below the sombre balustrade and its fiery trefoils, two gargoyles were unremittingly spewing out the burning rain, which showed as a stream of silver against the blackness of the facade. . . . Above the flame, each of the enormous towers displayed two harsh, sharp-edged faces, one quite black, the other quite red, and seemed taller still by the full immensity of the shadows they cast up into the very sky itself. Their countless sculptures of devils and dragons wore a dismal aspect. As one watched, the uncertain brilliance of the flame set them in motion. There were serpents that appeared to be laughing, gargoyles one seemed to hear yapping, salamanders blowing into the flames, dragons sneezing in the smoke. And amongst the monsters thus awoken from their stone sleep by the flame and the din, there was one who was walking about and was seen now and again to pass across the fiery brow of the pyre like a bat before a candle.[56]



87. François-Nicholas Chifflart, "Attack on Notre-Dame." From Victor Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris* (Paris: Hughes, 1877), p. 239. (Photo: author.)

Below, Clopin has a conversation with an old Gypsy who calls Notre-Dame an "old hag of a church" and is convinced that the demon going to and fro up there is not the hunchbacked bell ringer. "It's the spirit Sabnac, the great marquis, the demon of fortifications. He has the shape of an armed soldier and the head of a lion. Sometimes he rides a hideous horse. He turns men into stones and builds towers with them. He commands fifty legions."[57] This strange moment of subjective fantasy again reads like an uncanny premonition of those demons that will appear on the facade carved in stone. It is a detail based on the demonology provided by Collin de Plancy's *Dictionnaire infernal* (1818). This was a crucial source work, not only for Hugo but also, as we shall see, for Viollet-le-Duc when he came to think about creating his chimeras. In the novel at this moment and in Chifflart's image, the crowd is the monster: "It was as if some other church had despatched its gorgons, its mastiffs, its drees, its demons, its most fantastic sculptures, to the assault of Notre-Dame."[58] Here was born an idea that we shall explore further in chapter 5: that the chimeras are representations in stone of the wild Paris mob.

Kant made clear that the sublime works not in the object itself but also in the beholder, who is constructed as being in awe of the abyss. Nicholas Taylor lists

88. Charles Hugo, Victor Hugo on a rock. Photograph, 15.4 × 21.5 cm. Summer 1853. (Photo: BNF.)

among the sublime delights of the nineteenth century "the haranging of the Evangelical preachers; the ecstasy of the Anglo-Catholic mass; the scientific wonders of the panoramas and exhibition hall; the traveler's thrill in catching trains and climbing mountains; the capitalist's pride in the hum of mass production and the hubub of the market."[59] One might add to the list the looming gargoyles of the great cathedrals, which as both sites of attention from below and points from which to survey the world through their eyes from on high were part of the sensational Gothic of the mid-nineteenth century. Hugo makes of the cathedral a sublime mass that confronts the abyss of human incomprehension. This is the terrifying cathedral *quae mole sua terrorem incutit spectantibus*, "which by its mass fills spectators with terror." It is not the same kind of awe or terror that the building exerted in the thirteenth century, but one that is rooted in romantic and modern notions of subjectivity. It is as if the gargoyle, which had been invented to express the control and subjugation of evil in the working of God's overall plan, had revolted. Perhaps after 1789 such sculptures could no longer retain their apotropaic function, but could, as stones, revolt against the very edifice they were meant to cleanse and protect.

In 1853 Hugo himself had to flee the Paris mob, seeking sanctuary from the regime of Napoléon III, not in a high tower but on an island. His political exile was no less tinged with romantic archetypes of loss and longing—as evidenced in a photograph

of the great man seated on a rock in Guernsey and turned toward the land from which he has been banished (fig. 88). On this sharp promontory Hugo, still unbearded, appears like the greatest chimera of the cathedral he has left behind. Hugo appears in a guise he will take on increasingly in his later work—that of the devil himself. In *La Fin de Satan*, begun in 1854 but not published until after his death, Hugo makes the fallen angel a tragic hero contemplating in regret for eternity. As he falls at the beginning of the poem, "suddenly he sees himself growing bat wings; he sees himself becoming a monster; as the angel in him died, the rebel felt a pang of regret."[60] Not only does Hugo's Satan lie behind the re-creation of Notre-Dame as the monument to the freedom of the medieval imagination; his presence also lurks in the most haunting of all the chimeras created by Viollet-le-Duc.

IV · *Michelet and the Devil's Ogival Eye*

> Consider the deep, narrow orbit of the Gothic arch, of that *ogival eye*, when it strives to open, in the twelfth century. The eye of the Gothic arch is the sign by which the new architecture achieves its identity. The old art, worshipper of substance, was identified by the temple's material support, by the column. . . . Modern art, child of the soul and the mind, has for its principle not form but physiognomy—the eye; not the column but the vault; not the full but the empty.
>
> JULES MICHELET, *Histoire de France*[61]

Looking at the now weathered eye of the most famous of all Viollet-le-Duc's creations—the horned, winged demon—its pitted pupil, once curved into a beautiful ellipse, empty and vaultlike (fig. 89), reminds us that for some nineteenth-century viewers there was a direct link between the human eye and the Gothic style. Jules Michelet (1798–1874), in his 1833 essay "Gothic Ecclesiastical Architecture" in the first volume of his *Histoire de France*, had claimed that "the root of the word *ogive* is the German *auge*, 'eye,' its curvilinear angles are like the corner of the eye." He cited as an authority one of the earliest prerestoration monographs on the cathedral of Notre-Dame.[62] Michelet was the other great writer who, along with Hugo, helped restore the Middle Ages in the national imagination. The most famous historian of his era, he was a professor at the Collège de France and, like Hugo, a staunch republican enemy of the Second Empire. Jealous that Hugo had been the one to fully reveal the historical roots of the Gothic, he admitted: "I would at least speak of Notre-Dame de Paris but there is one who has laid such a lion's paw on this monument, as to deter all others from touching it."[63] In August 1831 Michelet wrote in his journal how Hugo's recently published novel viewed Notre-Dame as "capricieuse" when, in his opinion,

89. Viollet-le-Duc and Victor Pyanet, the pensive demon (no. 6), Notre-Dame, Paris, early twentieth-century photograph. MAP CNMHS.

it was more "scholasticism in stone" (scholastique de pierre). He went on to argue in surprisingly modern terms that gargoyles were embodiments of thought: "Around this superb dialectic of stone, which carries its thought skyward, around this gigantic religious protest of man compared to God, rises Satan, in monstrous gargoyles, in derisory figures, in bizarre obscenities. But all this does not get inside, it besieges the holy edifice in vain."[64] The melancholy gargoyle of Notre-Dame can also be seen as an embodiment of the historical gaze that was Michelet's.

Michelet's multiplying Middle Ages are closer to some of our own postmodern views of the period than to either Hugo's fierce fantasies or Viollet-le-Duc's dreams of order. Fiercely populist, anticlerical, and at the end as obsessed as we are today with sex, Michelet raved like a randy Ruskin or a hysterical Chateaubriand about an age he first adored and then later abhorred, setting the cathedrals on fire with a prose that is still astonishing. It was not the sacred statues of the cathedrals that attracted his gaze, but the gargoyles. It was as though too many painful memories of violence were aroused by the headless saints, and so his eye preferred to ponder the edges of edifices that had not been ravaged by the hands of iconoclasts. Yet Michelet saw the monstrous parts of the church as somehow "other" to it, a position he would increasingly embrace as his anticlericalism became more apparent.[65] He was even more insistent on the manifestations of the diabolical than Hugo, partly because he saw history as a constant struggle between good and evil. Another description of Notre-Dame written two years later, in August 1833, is important evidence that even before Viollet-le-Duc added more sculpture, Michelet saw the church's exterior proliferating with monsters that are deeply and truly terrifying: "Notre-Dame. Gargoyles are generally animals: fish, rams, crows, where brutality is strongly emphasized by a long ear, placed far back. At the corners, especially the corners of the towers, are figures mingling humanity and bestiality, great heads with wizened arms, who stretch their mouths with their hands, or who pull their hair. That completes the idea of the tower, which is that of the triumph of God. There is no irony or satire to be found here."[66] Michelet saw the cathedral not as a stage for playing out a melodrama, as did Hugo, but as history itself, a fractured history, which in postrevolutionary France meant a modern man such as he was estranged from the medieval stones.

> [The] profound symbolism [of the church], which spoke so loud in those days, has gone mute. Now it is an object of scientific curiosity. . . . The church is a Gothic museum visited by the learned: they circulate through it, stare at it without reverence, and praise instead of praying. . . . Let us touch these stones cautiously, let us walk lightly on these slabs. A great mystery has taken place here. Now I see nothing but death, and I am tempted to weep. The Middle Ages, the French Middle Ages, have expressed in archi-

> tecture their innermost thoughts: the cathedrals of Paris, of Saint-Denis, of Rheims, say more about their times than the longest narratives. The stone is animated and spiritualized beneath the artist's severe and ardent hands: out of them wells up life. The artist is well named in the Middle Ages: the master of living stones, *magister de vivis lapidibus*.[67]

It was this view of the cathedral as somehow alive, even in its decay—a view he shared with contemporary writers like Hugo and Edgar Quinet—that made Michelet so suspicious of restoration. On a foggy February morning in 1834 on his way to the archives, Michelet was admiring Notre-Dame shrouded in mist when he noticed how tomblike the dark stone structure seemed to be as it loomed around him, as though burying religion along with itself: "C'était l'enterrement de Notre-Dame et du catholicisme."[68] This refrain, that the past was an exhumed corpse spreading pestilence through the land, would only grow as the years went by and the cathedral took on an aspect of a ghoul—the living dead. In 1844, as Viollet-le-Duc's work on Notre-Dame was about to begin, Michelet wrote in his journal that the cathedral derived its power from its "stone men blackened by time, and the moss of old age, from the injuries of time, even from the mutilations and outrages of revolution." The restorer was a destroyer of time. "If . . . we whiten this church," he wrote, "we make the moss and ruins disappear; if we mix together there statues of all ages, we will make a museum."[69] Although initially respectful of Viollet-le-Duc, in his later writings the historian came to distrust the architect's close relationship to the sham he saw as the Second Empire.[70]

One of Michelet's accounts of the cathedral is actually a "bird's-eye view" and makes an interesting comparison with the description in Hugo's novel. The historian provides important evidence of the ruined state of the higher parts of the edifice before the restoration. Writing in his diary for 15 August 1835, he does not use this vantage point, as did Hugo, to meditate upon the ugliness of modernity and to lament the loss of a picturesque medieval Paris but rather to praise the metropolis in its eclecticism.

> Climbed the towers of Notre-Dame. Modern Paris is beautiful in its immensity and uniformity, like a Babel and a desert. It is beautiful in its variety, bringing together all styles, representing a résumé of the world: Byzantine domes in the Hall au blé and the prison of the rue de la Roquette, Greco-Italian in the Church of Saint Geneviève, the light and the heavy Gothic, Notre-Dame, the Sainte-Chapelle, etc., the Seine undulating in a pretty framework of columns, the obelisks of smoking chimneys. In climbing up these towers one sees the ravages of time; it has not been replastered like it has

below. . . . The angel sounds the trumpet: a large figure, naive and youthful; the wind has broken one of its wings, the other is transparent. The terrors of the roof, gargoyles, etc., are diminishing every day; each day the devil falls, he plunges to the pavement.[71]

This passage reveals just how how attentive Michelet was to the erosion of the past by the present. He describes sculptures visible from the western balustrade, like the beautiful angel in the center of the nave roof dating from the early thirteenth century, whose broken prerestoration state was recorded a decade later by a photographer. He saw in the fall of the last few crumbling gargoyles the decline of the demonic. But he was describing the death knell of the devil which Viollet-le-Duc, inspired by Hugo, would not long after resurrect once again on his tower-throne.

Michelet's views of the Middle Ages were to change radically during the many years he labored over his monumental history of France. In his preface to volumes 7 and 8 (1855), the volumes dealing with the Renaissance and Reformation, the tables turned. Here he presented his revisionist "Dark Middle Ages," when "proscribed nature was succeeded by anti-nature, from which the monster was spontaneously born, with two faces, one of false knowledge, the other of perverse ignorance."[72] The cathedral becomes "the hard city of crystal in which a terrible dogma sought to bury all life" and he would criticize his own earlier vital views of the period. He also blamed Hugo for distorting the period through his fascination with the "fantastic, strange, and monstrous."[73] Yet Michelet would eventually come to see the cathedral as far more diabolical even than Hugo.

For both Hugo and Michelet, the two thinkers who imagined the Middle Ages for modern France, the character who came to play the most important role in their late work was the devil. The Prometheus of their old age, Satan came to embody light and hope in the now dark era of faith. Along with the witch, Satan became a symbol of human freedom—negative, but creative and productive. One of the reasons Viollet-le-Duc's pensive demon was to become such a universally popular and reproduced image in the later decades was that it seemed, like no other image on any Gothic cathedral, to gaze from within the subject position of evil itself. Did he carry any of that Luciferian light we see in the late writings of Michelet and Hugo, or was he more the suave, Faustian Satan of the generation of 1830? He has been called "the Thinker" (*le Penseur*), "the Devil Resting on His Elbows" (*le Diable accoudé*), and "the Vampire" (*le Stryge*). But the devil of Notre-Dame is, above all else, the watchful one. More famous than any of the twelfth- or thirteenth-century statues on the western or transept portals of the cathedral and an "icon" of modern gargoyleness (to be explored later in the book), this statue remains as elusive today as when he was carved sometime between 1848 and 1850. We shall circle around him again and again

90. Monstrous figure leaning out at the corner of the right archivolt of the central portal of the Last Judgment, Notre-Dame, Paris, ca. 1210. (Photo: author, taken from scaffolding during recent restoration.)

in the course of this text in an attempt to surmise the subject of his stony stare.

Although Viollet-le-Duc made explicit his belief in the artist's constant reuse of the elements of the past in his creation, what is remarkable about the demon is how few of his references are to anything medieval. A crouching humanoid figure from the early thirteenth century at the edge of the central tympanum, which would have been close at hand, provides some of the beak-nosed and deep-eye-socketed ugliness of the figure and its great ear (fig. 90). But most of the models that lie behind this, his most famous invention, are to be sought in his own century. More than any other chimera, the melancholy demon embodies the romantic roots of the whole project. Now reduced by pollution to a scarred and vague mass, he has lost the wonderful crispness that Pyanet's chisel cut from Viollet-le-Duc's darks and lights. The darks create a noble extended brow that suddenly collapses into two deep eye sockets. To appreciate the power of the statue created, then, one has to look at either the early photographs or Méryon's engraving, to be discussed in part 2. One has to imagine the two stumpy horns protruding sharply from under a skull-cap, where a little tuft of fringe comes up around a vast ear, an ear large enough to capture all the sounds

of the city, an ear that listens as intently as the eye sees. Another significant detail is the long pointed fingernails of the statue. The inspector of historical monuments and Viollet-le-Duc's friend Prosper Mérimée in 1842 published a prose poem called "Le Vampire," which described a blue-eyed, beautiful vampire as a living corpse "whose fascinating gaze it was impossible to avoid" and who exhibited "one of the crucial signs of vampirism"—long fingernails.[74] Although it was only in 1861 that Charles Méryon in making his famous etching called him "le Stryge," or "the Vampire," there is evidence that he may have been seen as one of these totally nineteenth-century beings from the beginning.[75] The erotic and predominantly male figure of the midcentury vampire did not exhibit sharp teeth, as he would later, so much as what Mérimée describes as a "bouche . . . sanglante et sourit" and staring eyes visible in the stone demon.[76] The eyes, ears, and hands will be enough for us to deal with now, along with the general pose of melancholy. The nose and the tongue—two crucial signs that render him a more modern demon—will be dealt with in the next chapter, and as for the long, feminine hands, they will have to wait till even later.

The pose of the melancholic—with the chin resting in one hand—suggests contemplation and sadness and was traditional during the Middle Ages. Albrecht Dürer's 1514 engraving *Melencolia I* made her a brooding winged angel, stranded on the plane of materiality, surrounded by the new tools and ideas that she is unable to use or understand. As Erwin Panofsky, Fritz Saxl, and Ernst Klibansky showed, this single image of failed knowledge synthesized two millennia of medical and psychological theory about the influence of Saturn upon the bodily humors, the sin of *acedia*, or sloth, and the link between genius and illness. But Viollet-le-Duc's figure exhibits a different form of melancholy from the traditional medieval one. In Goya's famous 1799 etching *The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters*, number 43 of *Los caprichos*, the subject has collapsed into unconsciousness. Here the hunched male dreamer is threatened by bats and owl-like creatures of his own, dangerously productive imagination. In the rationality-riddled eighteenth century Lord Shaftesbury had described how one should "fight, as against chimeras, centaurs, monsters those unnecessary, wandering, uncertain [ideas] that haunt the mind."[77] Viollet-le-Duc produced a figure who has become just as emblematic of thought struggling to find its object. The contemplative intensity of the dark temperament and its associations with unfulfilled desire, disease, and genius are projected upon none other than the prince of darkness himself.[78]

This subjectification of the demonic was not unique to Viollet-le-Duc, but part of a general trend in the nineteenth century. The devil was in the air, literally, when Viollet-le-Duc conceived and Pyanet carved the figure that sits brooding over the city on the inner corner of the south tower.[79] Charles Nodier, whose *Voyages pittoresques*

provided the playground for Viollet-le-Duc's young Gothic imagination, had published in 1822 *Infernalia*, "stories about revenants, specters, demons, and vampires," and under the influence of E. T. A. Hoffmann and other German romantics, as well as the English Gothic novel, Paris went demon-crazy. In 1834 Théophile Gautier wrote in *Le Figaro* that "one could now scarcely read a novel, hear a play, or listen to a story without being beset by mystical words, or angelic, diabolical, or cabalistic names."[80] Writers like himself who called themselves "La Jeune France" were viewed by some as devil-worshippers, who read "nothing but marvelous legends, ancient romances of chivalry, . . . German ballads, books on sorcery and demonology."[81] Already in his preface to *Cromwell* (1827) Victor Hugo had declared the devil's centrality as a hero of the modern grotesque, which had given Satan "his horns, his goat's hooves, his bat's wings."[82] Louis Boulanger, an artist constantly inspired by Hugo's poem on the subject, created a lurid image, *La Ronde du sabbat*, in 1828, full of writhing, demonic, muscular figures, many of which have the same flattened skeletal physiognomies as the carved demon of the stone cathedral, who fly up to the vaults of a church in a whirlwind of flesh (fig. 91). What made Hugo's 1831 novel and this image so shocking is the juxtaposition of the sacred space and its liturgical symbols with horror, death, and sexuality, the demonic antiliturgy that is the witches' sabbath. Such juxtapositions were totally alien to Gothic art of the thirteenth century but enthralled the nineteenth-century audiences, who no longer saw the space of the cathedral as sacrosanct but who had witnessed its emptiness and desecration during the Revolution.

The romantic devil is a figure who above all sees and who sees above all. His pose in Viollet-le-Duc's statue draws attention to the front of his face and to his piercing gaze over the city, a city that was associated with hell itself. Alfred de Vigny had called the metropolis "Hell! Eden of the world!" and Hugo himself in *Les Miserables* stated, "The spirit of Paris, this demon."[83] Of course, Hugo did not invent the idea of the "devil's-eye view" of Paris, but his vision of the cathedral helped popularize the notion of the world spread before the gaze as before Christ in the gospel account of his temptation by the devil. This demonic, rather than touristic, gaze looking down on Paris became a powerful topos of the period visible in popular as well as high art. One of its sources was Alain René Lesage's 1707 novel *Le Diable boiteux*, in which a lame devil has the power to lift the rooftops off buildings, enabling him to see the private lives of those inside. This demon's name is Asmodeus, and he appears in countless popular representations throughout the early nineteenth century. Perhaps Asmodeus is the real name of the melancholy personage sitting on Notre-Dame? He is certainly not the medieval devil, who was represented in art as more beast than person, constantly changing shape and never as an empathetic or sympathetic character. By contrast, the devil of Notre-Dame is a personality with a pondering subjectivity,

91. Louis Boulanger, *La Ronde du sabbat*, 1828. Lithograph based on Victor Hugo, *Odes et Ballades*, ballade 14 Paris, Maison de Victor Hugo. (Photo: Bulloz.)

92. Eugène Delacroix, *Mephistopheles Flying at Night over a City*. From illustrations to Goethe's *Faust*, 1828. (Photo: BNF.)

93. Jean Feuchère, *Satan*, 1835. Bronze. Los Angeles County Museum of Art. (Photo: Los Angeles County Museum of Art).

with whom we have all identified. François René de Chateaubriand (1767–1848), the founder of French romanticism, had expressed admiration for the grandeur of Milton's Satan. The winged, fallen angel owes even more to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust: Eine Tragödie*, where he reappears with a new name, Mephistopheles. A complex figure, ironic, cold with the supercilious air of the dandy, Mephistopheles is crucially both attractive and repulsive. Most of the demonic characters of the nineteenth century owe something to this sardonic, very human monster. One pictorial influence on Viollet-le-Duc's conception of the demon is straightforwardly Faustian. Delacroix's *Mephistopheles Flying at Night over a City* was the second in a series of lithographs illustrating Alfred de Vigny's French translation of Goethe's *Faust*, published in 1828 (fig. 92).[84] It is not only the flattened nose, muscular human body, and gorgeous feathery rather than reptilian wings that make Delacroix's image the most powerful model behind the brooding demon, but also his piercing gaze from high over the city. Another important work of romantic art that Viollet-le-Duc knew

94. Eugène-Modeste-Edmond Lepoittevin, *Diableries*, 1832. Lithograph. (Photo: BNF.)

that was also linked to Alfred de Vigny was Jean Feuchère's bronze Satan first presented in plaster at the Salon of 1834. This provided another more compact model of the pensive and tormented angel (fig. 93).[85] Wrapped within his bat's wings, the devil in this superb composition suggests an introspective archfiend.

The demon of Notre-Dame has large horns. Viollet-le-Duc's drawings for the *Voyages pittoresques* show that the young architect's imagination was filled with the craze for *Diableries fantastiques* of the 1830s, which also made horned demons into humorous, even erotic subjects. In these vignettes monkeylike imps infiltrate every nook and cranny of bourgeois life, lifting up skirts of sleeping damsels to impregnate them with vast pencils, assuming the role of demon-doctors to examine the protruding tongues of young girls, their horns forever "horny." Even the noses of these devils become pricks pulled on chains by pretty girls (fig. 94).[86]

95. Ferdinand-Jean Joubert, lithograph representing Meyerbeer's play *Robert le diable*, 1830s. (Photo: BNF.)

In stories by Gautier and lithographs by Paul Gavarni young dandies hid their little horns under top hats, but the phallus pokes out more obviously on the cathedral, where it always has. This insistently phallic eroticization of the devil was popularized through romantic stories like *Le Diable amoureux*, by Jacques Cazotte, republished with additions by Gérard de Nerval in 1845.

Some of this theatricality attends our figure, too, especially his costume-ball horns, which seem to be part of an actor's cap, related to the current fascination with Satan in the theater. In such plays as *Satan, ou le diable à Paris*, produced at the Vaudeville in 1844, or Giacomo Meyerbeer's play *Robert le diable* (fig. 95), Parisians applauded similar devils jumping about the stage in leotards and dancing through clouds of fake smoke. In this sense one might describe this chimera as a kind of "historical theater," such as that of Alexandre Dumas, which played to cheering crowds in these same years. Michel de Certeau described this theatrical re-creation of the past as a repetition of the old that "forbids one to feel at home in the new age." Like this form of theatrical uncanny, "it expresses new fantasies, desires, and conflicts using shades drawn from the parental world, the disappearance of which is 'uncertain.' That is what representing is. . . . The world of yesteryear is summoned to recount *our* history: that is what ensures that it 'cannot harm us,' that it 'presents no danger.'" Here de Certeau recalls Michelet's words about the "dead" he "safely" visits in the tombs of the past

and puts his finger on a pivotal moment in the nineteenth-century visualization of the past, fundamental to our understanding of the chimeras: "In this theater of historical operations the *voice* of the past is transformed into *images* presented to the public."[87]

This accelerated visualization, a transformation of words into images, was made possible by cheaper techniques of printing, especially that of wood engraving, which Viollet-le-Duc himself was to exploit in the thousands of illustrations he included in his *Dictionnaire*. Among the popular sources used by writers like Victor Hugo were the works of Collin de Plancy (1791–1881), such as *Le Diable peint par lui-même* (1819) and the various editions of the *Dictionnaire infernal* (1818). In a kind of advertisement appended to a reprinting of the lavishly illustrated 1863 edition, which included the wood-engraved "portraits" of seventy-two demons by Louis Breton, no less an authority than Denis-Auguste Affre, the archbishop of Paris and first prelate of Notre-Dame, gives his seal of approval to the project, stating there is nothing against "faith or morals" in the book. Here in alphabetical order are all the various demons and subdemons and "stryges" illustrated in their spectacular ugliness, as well as entries on subjects such as "formes du diable" and many of the diabolical animals we see among the chimeras: the owl, the eagle, the cat, the dog, the elephant, and the boar (fig. 96). The entry "Formes du diable" cites such iconographers as Adolphe-Napoléon Didron to the effect that in the west "the devil most often takes human form, but ugly and disgusting." Although the visual sources for Viollet-le-Duc's chimeras are not to be found here, as some scholars have suggested, since Breton's illustrations were not published until 1863, this volume indicates how far occult ideas had permeated French culture of the time.[88] The *Dictionnaire infernal* is a diabolical version of Viollet-le-Duc's own *Dictionnaire* (1854–68). The rational, seemingly neutral, and objective organization of the alphabet which so appealed to the rational restorer had, like so much else in Paris, also gone to the devil.

96. Encyclopedia of demons: Collin de Plancy's *Dictionnaire infernal* (Paris, 1863). (Photo: author.)

The status of the demonic in general and the devil in particular was highly contested in nineteenth-century French culture. Did people still really believe in him? In the thirteenth century the bishop of Paris, William of Auvergne, had written a whole Latin treatise on diabolical manifestations and the dangers of unorthodoxy, sug-

97. Jean-Adolphe Beaucé, title vignette of the *Almanach comique* (1842). Lithograph. (Photo: BNF.)

gesting that when the cathedral was first built, intellectuals shared with the common people an awareness of supernatural evil manifesting itself in corporeal forms. One might imagine that things had changed radically by the middle of the nineteenth century. In the 1830s the alienist and medical writer Jean-Étienne-Dominique Esquirol wrote of the decline of witchcraft, diabolical possession, and the like, since the advent of "religious education, the better rearing of children, and widespread schooling have equally enlightened all classes."[89] But another writer in 1843 disagreed with the idea that "demonomania is extremely rare in the nineteenth century," pointing out that it was only in Paris that such enlightened views could be assumed.[90] The Morzine epidemic, which began in 1857 and lasted more than fifteen years, afflicted dozens of villagers with the belief that they had been possessed by the devil, proving that in the provinces the devil was alive and kicking.[91] Clearly the demon of Notre-Dame would have appeared differently to an enlightened and bourgeois Parisian romantic like its creator, than to a superstitious or devout visitor from the provinces, who might indeed have still been frightened by this apparition in stone.

The melancholy demon was anything but provincial, however. He stood less as a symbol of medieval credulity in this period and more for the most urbane, progressive political ideas, the liberties of the critical press, and the truth of journalism. The devil craze was driven by the same diabolical ability to duplicate, to repeat. The work of the devil in the age of mechanical reproduction was to make the image profligate, cheap, and thus far more volatile an agency in urban life than it had ever been before.

The devil looks down from the Tour Saint-Jacques in an advertisement from the *Almanach comique* for 1842, thumbing his nose at society and seated astride a curiously columnar gargoyle, while a devil shits books down on a waiting audience (fig. 97). The artist of this print, Jean-Adolphe Beaucé, along with Daumier and Gavarni, was seen in the guise of demonic forces watching the world below from a high vantage point. Hugo called the Tour Saint-Jacques an "anti-church as an already constituted fragment of lost Paris." Stories and legends grew up around it. In 1831, the same year that Hugo published his novel, Gérard de Nerval published his "Fragments de Nicolas Flamel" in the *Mercure de France*, in which Satan has a rendezvous with the legendary Parisian Flamel on the summit of the Tour Saint-Jacques, in which the alchemist contemplates the panorama of Paris. In April of the same year Alfred de Vigny published his "elevation" titled *Paris*, which opened with a description of the city viewed from a high tower that was inspired by the temptation of Christ. Other radical journals, whose contributors included critics like Champfleury, had names like *Le Corsaire-Satan* and *La Silhouette*, with its manic little cutouts of demons. The devil was used in these journals to demand social justice, especially leading up to the 1848 revolution and before censorship was introduced under the Second Empire.[92] But even after 1852 the link between the devil's gaze and journalism continued. Doré's illustration for the *Gazette de Paris* in 1856 portrays the devil as a dashing journalist surveying Paris from the Tour Saint-Jacques (fig. 86). A paper stuck on one of the gargoyles reads: "See, Understand, Criticize."

Even more widespread was the whole genre of literary works based on the conceit of the devil paying a visit to his favorite metropolis. The much-reprinted volume of stories and images *Le Diable à Paris* (1845–46) contains a whole section based on Victor Hugo's "Bird's-Eye View of Paris," with an illustration of a woman watching a devil fly over the city as well as a double-page panorama.[93] A poster for this publication by Gavarni shows another horned but romantically coiffed impressario surveying the city laid under his feet on a map through a magnifying glass, a design also repeated on the title page of some editions (fig. 98). He also holds a lantern, which will link him through new machines like the magic lantern with the phantasmagoria of precinematic projected images.

98. [Brugnot?], Satan surveying Paris (detail). From *Le Diable à Paris* (Paris: Hetzel, 1845). (Photo: author.)

99. The "Baphomet" of the Church of Saint-Merri, Paris, restored in 1842. (Photo: author.)

Satan as a see-er through walls and a panoptic peerer into people's souls from above became a popular symbol for opticians' signs and purveyors of glasses, like the little demon who holds a "lorgnon" on the nose of a critic in the vignette illustrating *Le Diable vert*, a satiric almanac published in 1850 with demonic tales by Gérard de Nerval. Everywhere one looked in Paris in this period, the devil seemed to be looking too. Viollet-le-Duc's demon at Notre-Dame is not a unique sculptural manifestation of the modern diabolical Gothic. In Paris there is another gazer of similar ghoulish aspect, the so-called Baphomet of Saint-Merri, an impish demon who sits atop a pinnacle on the western portal of the late medieval parish church of that name on the Right Bank (fig. 99). There are guidebooks which suggest this carving is medieval and one of the "mysteries of Paris."[94] He is in fact part of the 1842 restorations and shows how much the fashion for rediabolizing the Gothic monuments of Paris was already underway before the restoration of Notre-Dame. What Hugo's writings provided was a locus for the diabolical gaze at the heart of the city itself, from the vantage point where Viollet-le-Duc would place his incarnation of the devil's scopic desire.

Another powerful image that Hugo inscribed upon the stones of Notre-Dame which has important repercussions for the way in which the balustrade subsequently became a site of spectacle, a place to be visited, was the very notion of inscription itself. In a prefatory note to the novel he had first related his discovery of the mysterious graffiti from which the story was spun:

> A few years ago, when the author of this book was visiting, or rather exploring, Notre-Dame he found, carved by hand on the wall in a dark recess of one of the towers, the word ANAGKH (Fatality). The Greek capitals, black with age and cut quite deep into the stone, the forms and attitudes of their calligraphy, which had something peculiarly Gothic about it, as if to show that the hand which had inscribed them there was a medieval one. . . . Since then the wall has been either distempered or scraped (I forget which) and the inscription has gone. For such is the treatment accorded to the marvellous churches of the Middle Ages for close on two hundred years. Mutilation has come on them from all sides, from both within and without. The priest distempers them, the architect scrapes them, then along comes the populace which demolishes them. Thus, apart from the fragile memento here dedicated to it by the author of this book, there is today nothing left of that mysterious word engraved in the gloom of the tower of Notre-Dame, nothing left of the unknown destiny of which it was so cheerless a summary.[95]

By the 1840s a guide would show visitors to the cathedral a little room close to the northern bell tower where M. Hugo had supposedly written his novel, along with the inscription (miraculously returned) that inspired it. But there were soon so many ANAGKHS on the wall that no one knew which was the original. People scribbling their names on great monuments was a constant problem for restorers and *archéologues* of the period, who feared their obliteration through this manic urge to write "So-and-so was here." Just as a snapshot later provided a way of taking away a piece of the visited place, such acts of inscriptions were a means of leaving part of oneself behind. Chateaubriand, for example, unable to visit the Pyramids of Egypt himself, asked a friend to inscribe his name on the tomb of Memnon there.[96] Viollet-le-Duc responded to this problem and with a blow of very un-Hugolian pragmatism. A stone tablet was placed just above one of the bird chimeras below the south tower where it remains to this day, bearing this official warning: "It is expressly forbidden to write on the lead or the walls, to ring the bells, to throw anything from the towers, and to make any mess under penalty."[97] No one paid much attention to the first prohibition, evidenced by the number of initials and names of visitors carved onto the very bodies of the chimeras. But more important still, this notice—itself a form of inscription—shows how much Viollet-le-Duc conceived the new space of the balustrade as a site of bourgeois spectacle rather than for individual romantic reverie, a site which had to be kept clean and be policed as rigorously as any Parisian park. Those who sought to "do a Quasimodo" and ring the bells or even those of loftier aspirations, who sought to inscribe their prophetic words on the walls of the great book, were liable to a fine. While he shared Hugo's vision of Gothic architecture as a living language as well as

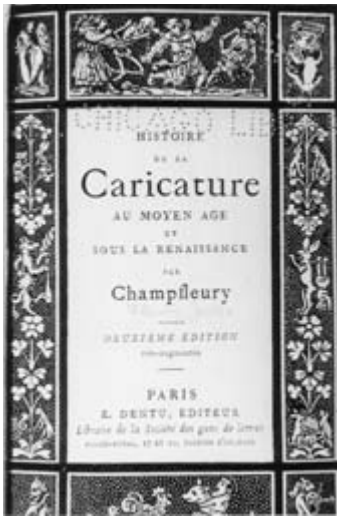
Michelet's view of gargoyles as expressions of lay freedom against church orthodoxy, Viollet-le-Duc created a far less mysterious and occluded space. His monsters could not be representatives of the inchoate horror and cruelty that Hugo dramatized in his great novel, nor could they express the fatality that Michelet described as fundamental to the Middle Ages. Even the demonic genius that he later saw as its paradoxical salvation would have gone against the architect's essential optimism. For Viollet-le-Duc the monster was a rational force of human creation, and its purpose within a larger context was to achieve order, not to suggest chaos. "Gothic architecture, at its commencement, was a protest against monastic influence; it was the first and most vigorous reaction of knowledge, examination, and inquiry into facts against tradition."[98]

If the young Viollet-le-Duc had been caught up in the Hugolatrian frenzy in the 1840s when he began to work on the restoration, twenty years later, when it was finished, his views about the most famous French writer of the century had changed. As an exile and enemy of the emperor for whom Viollet-le-Duc had built the chateaux of Pierrefonds, Hugo's bloated genius could no longer be held up as a model. Viollet-le-Duc's rejection of his earlier romantic affiliations can clearly be seen in his 1872 review of Champfleury's *Histoire de la caricature au Moyen Âge*, which tells us a great deal about his later attitude to the grotesque and its role in medieval art. Two years after the fall of Napoléon III, defeat by Prussia, and fighting as an artillery officer against the Commune, he had retired from public life, less sanguine, embittered even. By contrast, that enormous and indestructable ego, Victor Hugo (who was to outlive the architect by six years), had returned from exile in the midst of the fighting to be paraded in triumph through the Paris streets, revered almost as a demigod. The gargoyle had gone through many transformations in the four decades since Hugo had written his novel and first stimulated interest in the Gothic. Champfleury represented a new generation of writers who sought to see the social underside of images, whether it be in a Courbet painting or a Gothic corbel.[99]

Viollet-le-Duc's review reveals some sympathies with the realist critic Champfleury's essentially anticlerical stance, repeating his belief that Gothic art was a "kind of freedom of the press." According to Viollet-le-Duc, Champfleury "declares himself the enemy of the *symbolateurs*, which designates a certain number of those in archaeology who seek to give every manifestation, painted or sculptured, a religious or social significance."[100] Although he agrees with this, he quotes Voltaire and plays the rational mind against the capricious carnival he sees in Champfleury's book. Making the distinction between a subject "crudely sculpted by naive artists," which he calls "barbarous" and not true "caricature," he argues that Romanesque art was entirely the domain of the religious orders, whereas Gothic art can be called "lay

art" (l'art laïque). He distances himself from the grotesque, however, arguing that the crude "monstrosities" visible in the Romanesque churches of western France "originate from the Orient." Although in his youth a keen caricaturist, Viollet-le-Duc argues here for its lesser status, that satire is useful only for understanding the history of "manners, desires, passions, the developments and causes of the decadence of civilizations." No caricature exists in Gothic art made between 1190–1240, he insists, which is the period during which Notre-Dame was originally built, yet he admits that the art of caricature is an example of a high degree of civilization. If Gothic architecture was a realm of freedom against religious narrowness, surely the Gothic gargoyle was part of what he called the lay artist's "enquiry into facts against tradition." It is these "facts"—the architect's fascination with science—that will concern us in the next chapter.

But before we leave Viollet-le-Duc's fraught fascination with the romantic grotesque, there is one last visual fact to be noticed. That he at least glanced at the cover of Champfleury's publication is indicated by his rather snide remarks that its "red" jacket suggests its author's political affiliation.[101] There was more to the cover than its radical red. In the top left-hand corner is a crude but clearly recognizable image of Viollet-le-Duc's pensive demon, alongside other "medieval" corbels and gargoyles, as an example of medieval caricature (fig. 100). It is interesting that Champfleury did not mention this sculpture in his book, and that the reviewer did not note this appearance of one of his own creations on the cover of the volume. Had Viollet-le-Duc disowned his most famous design? Was its relegation to the realm of caricature too demeaning for the disgruntled architect, who saw himself as a prophet of modern architecture, much as Victor Hugo saw himself as the originator of modern fiction? Whereas Hugo clung possessively to every word he ever wrote with the manic belief in his ultimate godlike (or satanic) authority, Viollet-le-Duc had a less omniscient stranglehold over the products of his imagination. Yet there it was on this book cover—an index of the centrality of this particular chimera in nineteenth-century visual culture, an anonymous and frequently misunderstood "medieval" statue that carried an unmistakable signal about race to its nineteenth-century audience.



100. Title page of Champfleury's *Histoire de la caricature au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1872). (Photo: author.)

4. Monsters of Race

THE GARGOYLES OF SCIENCE

The study of history, anthropology, and ethnography is not a chimera.
VIOLLET-LE-DUC, *L'Art russe*[1]

The English antiquarian Thomas Wright, in his *History of Caricature and Grotesque*, published in 1865, lamented the "ludicrous spirit" which predominated in the majority of "delineations of demons" during the Middle Ages. "The devils are droll but not frightful; they provoke laughter, or at least excite a smile, but they create no horror." His chapter closes with the one great exception, however, which he illustrates in a line engraving (fig. 101). "[There is], however, one well-known instance in which the medieval artist has shown himself fully successful in representing the features of the spirit of evil. On the parapet of the external gallery of the cathedral church of Notre Dame in Paris, there is a figure in stone, of the ordinary stature of a man, representing the demon, apparently looking with satisfaction upon the inhabitants of the city as they were everywhere indulging in sin and wickedness. We give a sketch of this figure in our cut No. 44. The unmixed evil—horrible in its expression in this countenance—is marvelously portrayed. It is an absolute Mephistopheles, carrying in his features a strange mixture of hateful qualities—malice, pride, envy—in fact, all the deadly sins combined in one diabolical whole."[2] This writer not only mistook a modern sculpture for a medieval one, but his terminology of "mixtures" and "qualities" is rooted in a modern science of reading faces—physiognomy. Wright's illustrator has even exaggerated certain aspects of Viollet-le-Duc's statue (fig. 102) in order to bring it closer to the profile types portrayed in Johann Caspar Lavater's *Physiognomische Fragmente* (1775–78), which was widely translated and published in a French edition of 1835, *L'Art de connaître les hommes par la physiognomie*, as well as a number of popular English editions. Here, a more pronounced undulation of the brow and nose are present than in the original, and "the spirit of evil" seems to morph into something like Lavater's "frog-man" (fig. 103). In this connoisseurship of the body, most telling is the central notion that the beauty and ugliness of the face are directly related to the beauty and ugliness of the moral disposition.[3] The outlines of the nose and the leering mouth in Wright's caricatural image of the demon seem

101. "The Spirit of Evil." From Thomas Wright, *A History of Caricature and Grotesque in Literature and Art*, 1865, p. 74. (Photo: author.)

102. The physiognomy of the pensive demon of Notre-Dame (no. 6) (detail).

103. Johann Caspar Lavater, "De la grenouille à l'Apollon du Belvédere" (detail). From *L'Art de connaître les hommes par la physiognomie*, new ed. (1835). (Photo: author.)

104. Johann Caspar Lavater, "volupté la plus brutale, & de la plus sordide avarice." From *L'Art de connaître les hommes par la physiognomie*, new ed. (1835). Regenstein Library, University of Chicago.

modeled upon certain of Lavater's types like "the most brutal sensual delight" (fig. 104). Lavater took many of his images from paintings and sculptures, treating human faces as though they were some geologic rocky strata being excavated for analysis, statues without motion or life. Yet these plates comparing, for example, the faces of a Spaniard, a Dutchman, a Moor, and a Native American were to have a profound effect upon the nineteenth-century notion of the representation of identity.

According to the principles of physiognomy, each feature of a person's face had the capacity to reveal not just his character but also his position on a Platonic hierarchy of being. Lavater's work was routinely consulted by the respectable French classes whenever they hired workers or made friends; the book had enormous impact on the social and visual culture of mid-nineteenth-century Paris, where the *Physiologies*, a series of small, illustrated books in which each volume described a certain social type, were all the rage.[4] It is not surprising that viewers trained to think in physiognomic terms would have "read" the chimeras of the cathedral as topographies not only of character but also of social and racial difference. The important question for us is whether physiognomy is relevant to our understanding not only of the reception, but also of the creation of the chimeras by Viollet-le-Duc.

Viollet-le-Duc's theories about the development of architecture, and most especially its apotheosis in thirteenth-century Gothic style, were based upon a widespread nineteenth-century belief in the superiority of certain races over others. At the end of each chapter of his *Histoire de l'habitation humaine* (1875), Viollet-le-Duc placed a vignette of a human face, usually linked to the ethnic type of architecture discussed. The first of these follows the book's opening chapter, "Are These Men?" which describes prehistoric humans building the first hut and shows a typical "uncivilized"

105. Viollet-le-Duc, "Primitive Man." From *Histoire de l'habitation humaine*, 1875, p. 7. (Photo: author.)

106. Viollet-le-Duc, "Aryan." From *Histoire de l'habitation humaine*, 1875, p. 14. (Photo: author.)

107. Viollet-le-Duc, "Semite." From *Histoire de l'habitation humaine*, 1875, p. 128. (Photo: author.)

physiognomic profile, a dark, deeply horizontal, aboriginal face in Lavaterian terms, significantly facing left as if looking backward against the grain of history (fig. 105). The next chapter, "Aryans," on the cultural advances made by the Caucasian race, ends with a noble, classical-looking Aryan face, seen in three-quarter view and looking "forward" to the right (fig. 106). This race is described as "tall, with long, blond hair, white skin, and blue eyes."[5] When he comes to "Semites" in a later chapter, Viollet-le-Duc describes them as "large, thin, with blackened skin, loose limbs, and black hair."[6] The vignette concluding this chapter shows a large-nosed profile, its cheek and nose reminiscent of the outlines of Wright's "spirit of evil," once again staring in a retrograde direction (fig. 107). The dynamic of history that Viollet-le-Duc believed propelled progress forward was reenacted for the reader turning the leaves of this book, passing through the faces on the pages.

Viollet-le-Duc was fascinated all his life by the sciences, especially biology, geology, and new disciplines like anthropology, which he believed provided a rational basis for understanding the natural evolution of all forms. He was inspired by Paris's more progressive and liberal thinkers, such as the zoologist Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire and the historian-politicians Adolphe Thiers and Edgar Quinet.[7] But the architect was also shaped by other, more ominous trends in scientific thinking of the period. In his *Entretiens sur l'architecture* he referred to Joseph-Arthur Comte de Gobineau's *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines*, published in 1855. "The results of recent studies in Germany, England, and France have clearly exhibited the special aptitudes of the three great races of man for intellectual production." He stated in the footnote, "The study of the question investigated in this remarkable work cannot be too strongly urged on architects who interest themselves in the history of the arts."[8] Gobineau was the crucial theorist of Aryanism, claiming that all races with dark skin and dark hair have blonde, white-skinned gods, suggesting that inferior physical types recognized the superiority of Aryans. Viollet-le-Duc embodied this very idea in the title-page vignette to his *Histoire de l'habitation humaine*, where dark natives learn the arts of geometry from the lyre of a higher, white, statuelike Apollo.

Only recently has it become clear how much his thought depended upon newly fashionable nineteenth-century racial models of evolution.[9] The decadent Romans, whom he viewed as falling into a hybrid architectural tradition (which his enemies at the École des beaux-arts continued to revere), he described as degenerates. They were inferior racially to those men building at the end of the twelfth century, in which "the domain of the arts passed entirely into the hands of the laity, that is to say, into the hands of the Gallo-Roman races, somewhat modified by the element contributed by the white races of the North."[10] Are these theories, which especially interested Viollet-le-Duc in the 1860s, also relevant to his creation of the chimeras a

decade earlier?

When he described his creations at Notre-Dame in the article "Sculpture" in his *Dictionnaire*, he emphasized that these "real or fabulous animals . . . that posed themselves on the exterior ledges of our great cathedrals" exhibit "traces of the splendid pantheism of the Aryans" (du panthéisme splendide des Aryans).[11] The religion of the pre-Christian Gauls lay behind the beasts of the balustrade. Gargoyles as embodiments of the "esprit gaulois" were thus rooted in race. Along with anthropological theory, this chapter addresses the impact of evolutionary science more generally upon the creation of the gargoyles as monsters of modernity. But before we come to look at the ape and the dinosaur—the two creatures that came to define the anxiety of origins most powerfully during the midcentury, we have to delve a little further into the earlier science of the human face that helped create what is the most marked physiognomy of racial otherness at Notre-Dame—the face of the melancholy demon, whose features are so well known to us it is hard to see them for what they once represented.

I · *The Spirit of Evil: Physiognomy*

> The Tartars, generally, have flat, curved noses; African blacks, stub noses; Jews, for the most part, hawk noses. The noses of Englishmen are seldom pointed, but generally round. If we may judge from their portraits, the Dutch seldom have very handsome or very significant noses. The great men of France, in my opinion, have the character of their greatness generally in the nose.
>
> JOHANN CASPAR LAVATER, *Physiognomische Fragmente*[12]

108. Jewish caricature in *Fliegende Blätter*, vol. 19, no. 449 (1854) (detail). (Photo: author.)

109. E. Lorsay, "Étrangers et provinciaux: Un claqueur, M. Nathan" (detail). From *Le Diable à Paris*, 1853. (Photo: author.)

The pensive demon's nose would have made him appear to his contemporaries very un-French, a foreigner, if not more probably a Jew. For George Jabert's popular *Notes on Noses*, written under the pseudonym Eden Warwick and first published in 1848, the year that the demon was probably first conceived, the Jewish "hawknose" was "very convex, and preserves its convexity like a bow, throughout the whole length from the eyes to the tip. It is thin and sharp."[13] In the statue the flatness of its tip and the strangely flared elongated nostril is not that of a primate at all but more akin to the hole in the beak of a bird of prey. Winckelmann had earlier described the Jew's nose as similar to that of a hawk.[14] This nasal type was common in caricature of the period throughout Europe (fig. 108). In France, however, the facial stereotyping was more subtle, making the Jew's nose more elegant and horizontal, as is visible in the widely read *Physiologies* and in *Le Diable à Paris* (fig. 109).[15] The demon's nasal protrusion hooking around to create a flattened tip can be seen in Viollet-le-Duc's later discus-

110. Viollet-le-Duc, "The Facial Angle in Egyptian Art." From *Histoire d'un dessinateur*, 1879, p. 109. (Photo: author.)

sion of "the facial angle" in his *Histoire d'un dessinateur* (fig. 110), which he took from another important early physiognomic theorist, Pierre Camper (1722–89).[16] In this text, as in his earlier designs for gargoyles and chimeras, Viollet-le-Duc was aiming at the universalizing effects of the profile. Just as architectural profiles of thirteenth-century Gothic piers followed certain organic rules, so too was this facial architecture designed to be clearly readable. He describes how, compared with other animals, man's face "presents, relative to its size, a notably larger volume than that of other carnivores, and the *os coronal*, in the place where it emerges and is depressed from the arch of the eyebrows, as is the case with carnivores and even apes, rises nearly vertically. Also one can recognize up to a point the intellectual capacity of man in the elevation of this frontal bone [*os coronal*]."[17] Significantly, the shape of the demon's head is elongated horizontally rather than vertically, swerving away from the proper perpendicular of the good and the beautiful toward the dark and Semitic.

Faces that take this particular form can be seen in numerous anti-Semitic propaganda images produced in the first half of the nineteenth century, which show the Jew's nose not as the audacious protrusion that would become typical of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century anti-Semitic stereotypes, but as an extension of the forehead, making it almost reptilian. For Lavater the lowest rung of animality began not with the monkey but with the frog and went through twenty-four stages. His first batrachian head was "an image replete with the most ignoble and bestial nature" (see fig. 103). There is no giant frog among the chimeras, but the heads of a number of the beasts—especially that of the most famous demon—approach the batrachian head, in which the eyes are set far back and the nose and mouth are pushed forward into a snout. In 1850 Robert Knox linked the Jewish with the African nose: "The African character of the Jew, his muzzle-shaped mouth and face removing him from certain other races . . . lips very full, mouth projecting, chin small, and the whole physiognomy, when swarthy, as it often is, has an African look."[18] The prominent mouth of some Jews was considered by some Aryan anthropologists to be due to the presence of black blood. As for the horns, some writers of the period linked the Semitic and the satanic. Alphonse Toussenel in his 1845 work *Les Juifs, rois de l'époque* described the Jew—although more serene, attractive, and younger in appearance than the stereotyped ugly old Shylock of the past—as no less dangerously inhuman in his Mephistophelean suavity. For the socialist writer Pierre Proudhon "the Jew is by temperament antiproductive, neither a farmer nor an industrialist, not even really a merchant. A go-between, always fraudulent and parasitic, who operates in business, as in philosophy, by falseness, feigning and shady dealing . . . he is the evil principle, Satan, Ahriman, incarnated in the race of Shem."[19]

Gothic architecture was deeply implicated in racial theories in this period, not

only on the level of nationalistic arguments of the style's French origins but also with regard to specific monuments. Viollet-le-Duc used the science of physiognomy to understand the development of naturalism in the features of Gothic jamb statues from Romanesque "Orientalism" to something pure and French. He saw the faces of the statues of the Foolish Virgins at Strasbourg Cathedral, for example, as bearing marks of the "Alsatian type." In contrast, the famous heads of the twelfth-century jamb figures of the royal portal of Chartres Cathedral, with the "nose greatly accentuated at the base and slightly curved . . . large closed mouth, distanced from the nose," represent "nothing of the German, nothing of the Roman. . . . There we have, it seems to us, a true type of the old Gaul."[20] These heads were seen to express pure verticality and, like their columnar bodies, uprightness and spirituality, whereas the pensive demon and his chimerical confreres are baser, cruder, crouching creatures of the horizontal.

Another important tradition that influenced sculpture of the period derived from the pioneering work of Franz Josef Gall (1758–1828), who studied the localization of brain function. Gall created the science of phrenology, which deduced normal or abnormal intellectual capacities from the shapes of skulls.[21]

One artist influenced by Gall's theories was the neoclassical sculptor Pierre-Jean David d'Angers (1788–1856).[22] Many of the young sculptors who worked on the restoration of Notre-Dame had trained in his studio, notably Geoffroy-Dechaume, Jean-Louis Chenillion, and Michel Pascal. Joseph Pyanet, though not a sculptor of the human form, but a maker of minor decorative objects like crockets, animals, and gargoyles, had his chance, in making the chimeras, to carve some extraordinary bony protrusions. The front of the pensive demon's skull is not very developed, but the back of the head—indicative of the desires and passions, in Gall's scheme—is enormous.

The link between cranial physiognomy and demonology is emphasized by a long entry on Gall in Collin de Plancy's *Dictionnaire infernal*, where the vignette shows how "excellence is in beauty of form" (excellence est dans la beauté de la forme). In the center is one of the famous sculpted profile busts representing Gall's cerebral map, with "Intelligence" written on its brow (fig. 111). To the right of the bust sits a beautiful woman with two perfectly formed infants. On the other side stands a Mephistophelian figure with great bat's wings who crushes the crania of children with his hands and feet, shaping their soft skulls under the darkness of his wings. Though lacking horns, he has the same large ears and egg-shaped head as the demon designed by Lassus at Notre-Dame (fig. 112), who is also crushing a living creature with his hands. This is a frog, perhaps a reference to the very lowest creature in Lavater's scheme, but the demon explores the creature's bumpy surface with

111. Illustration from the entry "Phrenology," in Collin de Plancy's *Dictionnaire infernal* (Paris, 1863). (Photo: author.)

112. Demon squashing a toad (no. 54), Notre-Dame, Paris. MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

113. Phrenologist at the Jardin des plantes. From Pierre Bernard et al., *Le Jardin des plantes*, 1842. (Photo: author.)

the same assiduous attention depicted in contemporary satiric images of phrenologists at work (fig. 113).

One of the chimeras may refer even more directly to the bump of diviners and quack craniologists. The creature with the most enlarged phrenological formations and enormous cerebral surface is the horned demon on the south tower (no. 17). Its knotted forehead and faceted skull are bursting with many of the twenty-seven "forces primitives" listed by Gall, or the thirty-two listed by his follower Johann Gasper Spurzheim, such as murderous instincts (*instinct carnassier*, *penchant au meutre*). The high cheekbones and bald cranium of this figure also suggest the skeletal core around which the art of physiognomy was structured. Pierre Camper had carefully mapped the transition from the skull of a monkey to that of the Apollo Belvedere. Many of Lavater's plates were also based on comparisons between Negro and animal skulls.

The pensive demon, however, is more than just a profile. He has vastly developed organs of sense, notably his large eyes, ears, and mouth. We have already seen how, for a writer like Michelet, the Gothic form itself was associated with the eye. The demon's eyes are sunk deep into his orbital caverns. These are the eyes that, in Baudelaire's writings, do not return the gaze. They are self-protective eyes, eyes characteristic of people on public transport, eyes of the prostitute looking for clients

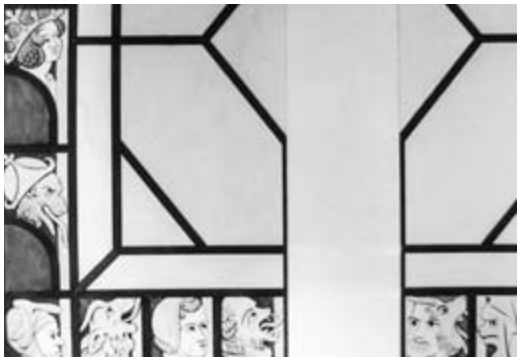
114. Lion-man (no. 13), Notre-Dame, Paris. Neurdein Frères postcard, ca. 1900. (Photo: author.)

115. Charles Le Brun, "Four Heads of a Man-Cat, Four Heads of a Man-Monkey." Black chalk. Paris, Louvre. (Photo: Réunion des musées nationaux.)

but also on guard against the police, "the self-protective wariness of a wild animal hunting for prey."[23]

This brings us to a whole mode of physiognomic history important to understanding the chimeras—the long tradition of identifying man with specific animals. Certain chimeras seem to come directly out of this venerable tradition, notably the lion-faced man (no. 12; fig. 114), whose intensely arched eyebrows remind us of Charles le Brun's drawings. Le Brun had argued that since "the gland in the central portion of the brain is the site where the soul registers the images of the passions, the eyebrow is thus the area of the face where the passions best reveal themselves."[24] Rather than his more noble lion drawing, Viollet-le-Duc's statue seems closer to Le Brun's cat-man, with his piercing eyes and flattened nose (fig. 115). The demon's physiognomy is unlike any single animal, though its mouth recalls Le Brun's ape-man drawn on the same page. The sculpture's mystery lies precisely in its not making a direct animal analogy, equating man with the irascible temperament of the lion, or the docile imbecility of the monkey. Instead, it refers to a human rather than animal hierarchy, an otherness that places it outside animal analogy.

The demon of Notre-Dame has no upper lip. This is the most inhuman thing about him—his tongue protrudes from a muzzle rather than a mouth capable of smiling or speaking. However, a most striking feature of the demon's head is his protrud-



116. Heads with tongues shown in fourteenth-century stained glass from a chapel on the interior north, Notre-Dame, Paris. From É. Leconte, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, 1841. (Photo: author.)

ing tongue, which is human, linking him with speech and "la langue." The tongue seems to be licking the demon's nonexistent lips. The verb "to lick" in French, *lécher*, is linked to the term "lechery." Whereas medieval gargoyles stick out their tongues directly at the viewer in the tradition of grimacing, this creature's tongue sticks out pensively, not to offend but almost as a sign of contemplation.

There are both medieval and contemporary sources from which Viollet-le-Duc might have taken the idea of the protruding tongue. A book he certainly knew was É. Leconte's *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1841) which included among its plans and elevations of the cathedral a beautiful, full-page color lithograph of details taken from a fourteenth-century stained glass window inside the cathedral, showing various demons sticking out their tongues (fig. 116). What makes this image typical of the Middle Ages and not of modernity is its variety—there are different kinds of tongues and profiles to these marginal monsters, locating horror not in a single type but in the fleeting fluidity of the human face. In one of Lavater's works the tongue of a

SAVANT ALLEMAND SUR LA PHYSIOGNOMONIE. 195
Qu'on me pardonne cette ſuite de contraſtes que je préſente à mes
Lecteurs. C'eſt ainſi ſeulement qu'on peut & qu'on doit parvenir à ſe con-

117. Johann Caspar Lavater, "Atrociousness between Two Figures of Goodness." From Johann Caspar Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy* (London, 1797). (Photo: author.)

118. J.-J. Grandville, "Angels and Demons." From *Un Autre Monde*, 1844. (Photo: author.)

grotesque face taken from a sixteenth-century painting protrudes as part of the contrast between "atrociousness" that revolts us and goodness that attracts us (fig. 117). But the tongue's slippery sensuality, as an index of appetite, was most brilliantly expressed by Grandville in his *Un Autre Monde* (*Another World*) of 1844 in a wood engraving titled "Anges et Démons." Here dandy-demons lolling languorously on the ground look up to an angelic pulpit or opera box where an angel peers over and one prominent horned fellow sticks out his tongue at her with the same pert audacity as the demon at Notre-Dame (fig. 118). Yet the statue's tongue is not stuck out *at* something. It is not a hideous gesture of offense seen in many medieval faces, based on the apotropaic power of the classical Gorgon, where the tongue is a clear substitute for the penis and its power to avert the evil eye. A small nub slithering out of the creature's wet stone mouth in thought, delectation perhaps, defines this desire as masculine—despite the softer arms and delicate hands. The tongue was a dangerous and obscene organ. In trials of the period the tongue of the defendant is often described as entering where it should not and kissing on the mouth was considered

119. A black face among the risen dead, Notre-Dame, Paris, west front, central portal, Last Judgment. Removed fragment now in the Musée nationale du Moyen Âge. (Photo: Musee nationale du Moyen Âge).

even more erotic than touching the genitals.[25] This protruding organ thus disturbs the clarity and readability of the physiognomic outline and animates this bone-bare visage with something obscenely fleshly—a spurting phallus sticking out of the stone socket like a worm crawling through an empty skull.

In the *Cours d'esthétique*, the lectures published in 1864, the year the restoration of Notre-Dame was finished, Viollet-le-Duc wrote: "Human races are not equal among themselves, and, to speak of only two extremes, it is evident that the white races which have populated Europe for three thousand years are infinitely superior to the black races which have inhabited Africa from times immemorial. The first have a regular history, a succession of civilizations which have been more or less perfected . . . the other are today what they were twenty centuries ago."[26]

Among the most beautiful and striking of the thirteenth-century physiognomies carved on the central portal of the west facade of the cathedral of Notre-Dame is that of a young black man, one of the earliest portrayals of a non-Western face in medieval art (fig. 119).[27] With his wide nose and full lips he turns his elegant head sharply toward us as he sits up in his tomb, startled back to life by the sound of the angel's trumpet. It is the end of time and he, like all the diverse peoples on God's earth, has

120. The wandering Jew (no. 38). From a CM postcard, ca. 1900. (Photo: author.)

been called to judgment. It might surprise us that the medieval sculptor was himself so nonjudgmental in representing a person of another race in so neutral a manner. For when Viollet-le-Duc came to restore this part of the tympanum and placed this sculpture in the safety of the Cluny Museum, far uglier stereotypes of black and other non-Western races not only were more visible and virulent but also were being created for the cathedral itself. Rather than see himself included among the resurrected, a non-Western visitor to Paris was more likely to see himself excluded from the sacred edifice, embodied in the leering gargoyles and demons high above. This was true not only of visitors from other countries. There were those who had lived in the city for centuries who saw themselves not only depicted and denigrated high up on the balustrade in the extreme facial angle of the prominently placed demon who looks to the west, but also essentialized as a human racial type.

II · *The Wandering Jew: Aryanism*

An old man with a pointed hat and long, flowing beard, which he clutches with the fingers of his left hand, leans out over the corner of the north tower, looking toward the east. He is the only one of the fifty-four chimeras on the cathedral who is fully human (no. 38). Indeed, there is nothing disturbing about him—except that he is a Jew (fig. 120).

This statue is sometimes referred to as "the alchemist," particularly in nonacademic, pseudo-occult literature on the cathedral. This is one of many modern misinterpretations of this figure, including the idea, recently promulgated on a Web site, that "this is the likeness of one of the foremen on the restoration crew of Viollet-le-Duc. Apparently the foreman was a demanding taskmaster and many of his workers came to loathe him. One worker . . . worked on days off, lunch breaks, and holidays to create the likeness of his hated boss for the world to see as a gargoyle."

In fact, Viollet-le-Duc intended this figure to represent neither a medieval alchemist nor a loathed foreman. In 1860 Auguste Marc-Bayeux, writing the article "La Flèche de Notre-Dame" in *Paris qui s'en va et Paris qui vient*, describes the figure in the midst of all the other chimeras in clearly racial terms: "Here a horrible ghoul looks at you, a bear with asses's ears, a horned cow, a frighteningly lascivious goat, a phantom leaving the coffin, and the most damned of all, a Jew with his pointed cap."[28]

Viollet-le-Duc created an image that is not overtly grotesque. In fact, there is something rather appealing about the old man, his right hand pressing the edge of the balustrade, his left coming up to touch his long beard, his deeply furrowed brow looking earnestly out from the stone citadel (fig. 121). His hat with its pointed curled top was the sign of the medieval Jew, as described in Viollet-le-Duc's *Dictionnaire raisonné du mobilier français*.[29] It is this headgear and the long, flowing beard that made him not just any Jew but Ahasvérus, the wandering Jew in mid-nineteenth-century iconography. This figure is in fact as archetypal a romantic image as that of the melancholy demon and might be seen as his more positive other. The legend of the Jew condemned by Christ to wander the earth for eternity had currency in the Middle Ages, but its popularity was never so strong as in the romantic period, when it fascinated Goethe, Schlegel, Wordsworth, and Byron as well as numerous artists (figs. 122–24).[30]

121. The wandering Jew (no. 38). MAP CNMHS. (Photo: Jannie Mayer.)

In 1833 Edgar Quinet, a friend of Viollet-le-Duc, made *Ahasvérus*, the eponymous hero of a novel in which the wandering Jew becomes the symbol of suffering, laboring humanity, a Promethean and Faustian figure of the human daring to defy destiny. In Quinet's work the great cathedral itself curses the wandering Jew: "Sois maudit, Ahasvérus!" With the whole of humanity against him and death and hell about to engulf him, he is saved by the pity of a woman, Rachel. Throughout the third part of the poem the Gothic Cathedral of Strasbourg itself is given a voice: "Come, my stone saints, come, my saints dozing on my windows, get up! Do you hear me? Come, my granite virgins, sing in your niches as you turn your spindles. Come along also my griffins who carry my pillars on your heads, open your throats. . . . Come, dwarfs, angels, serpentine dragons, salamanders, gorgons, encrusted in the folds of my pillars, blow out your cheeks, open your mouths, cry, sing with your tongues and your

122. François-Joseph-Aimé de Lemud, "The Wandering Jew." From Pierre-Jean de Béranger, *Oeuvres complètes*, 1846, 2:214. (Photo: author.)

123. Gustave Doré, poster for *La Legende du juif errant*. (Photo: BNF.)

124. Cham [Amédée-Charles-Henri, comte de Noé], *La Parodie du juif errant, complainte constitutionelle en dix parties* (Paris, 1844). (Photo: University of Chicago Library.)

porphyry voices, scream in the arch of the vault, in the stones of the pavement, on the tip of the spire, in the dust of the vault, in the niche of the nave, in the hollow of the bell."[31] The screaming, singing voices of the stones crying out were a powerful and influential image. Hurling their voices at the abyss, the gargoyles have to have their mouths open in order to function, not as waterspouts but as voices of the cathedral. Viollet-le-Duc was surely thinking of the clamouring throng of stones crying out for justice in Quinet's cosmic melodrama when he designed the fifty-four statues for the balustrade. The cathedral in Quinet's imagination is a kind of arouser of the dead, making the kings arise from their tombs to join all the images in a dance of death that is actually a dance of the images. They become so loquacious that Christ, speaking from one of the stained glass windows, has to intervene and quiet them. "My cathedral, that's enough," he says.[32]

The other myth about the cathedral that Quinet's work was to stamp on the rest of the century was the notion of its temporal extension through all time, its encapsulation of past, present, and future. The cathedral tells of its own incompletion. "When the young workers with their trowels had climbed singing right up to the foot of my tower, they said to the master mason, 'Master, will we be finished soon? Work is long, life is short.' The master did not reply. When the young workers, having become men, had climbed with their trowels up to the window of my tower, they said to the master mason, 'Master, will we be finished soon? Look! Our hair is turning white, our hands are too old; we are going to die tomorrow.' The master replied, 'Tomorrow your sons will come, then your grandsons, after them in a hundred years, with their new trowels, . . . no one, neither master nor worker, will ever see the tower sealed against the sky, nor its last stone. It is God's secret.'"[33] This is the notion of the forever unfinished cathedral, of which the old Jew's gaze is a part. For the legend of the wandering Jew is about time. The restoration of Notre-Dame took twenty years. Viollet-le-Duc sought to undo that myth, to the extent that even without adding the two spires, it was enough. Such a universalizing temporal trajectory is perhaps one of the reasons for the placement of Ahasvérus among the chimeras. His inclusion points backward to the time of Christ but also forward to a still unstable future.

This image of the Jew as exiled wanderer underwent its most profound transformation in *Le Juif errant*, the popular novel by Eugène Sue published serially in the journal *Le Constitutionel* (1844–45). Although Sue began his story with Christ pointing the condemnatory finger, the novel traces the story of a contemporary Jewish family's attempts to claim a treasure bequeathed to them by a Protestant centuries before. The villains of the story are the Jesuits, who along with a mysterious group of "Indian stranglers" (étrangleurs de l'Inde) do all they can to take the money from its rightful heirs. After much love, intrigue, murder, and mayhem, nearly everyone

dies. So popular was this tale that the wandering Jew became the subject of spin-offs and operas, as well as a brilliant parody illustrated by Cham that appeared in *Le Charivari* (1884–85).[34] In 1853 one could be excommunicated for reading *Le Juif errant*, and Sue was exiled from France. The statue of Notre-Dame, especially in its placement on the eastern side of the south tower looking toward the east and his historial and spiritual home, also seems exiled, stranded on a Christian monument and still awaiting the return of his messiah.

Viollet-le-Duc's statue seems to owe the most to the idealized figure drawn by François-Joseph-Aimé de Lemud and published in Perrotin's edition of Pierre-Jean de Béranger's *Chansons* (1846). The long-suffering, muscular figure strides through the ruins of architecture, away from the remains of a fallen ancient world full of broken classical idols and toward a Gothic arch representing the promise of a Christian future (fig. 122). This association between the wandering Jew and the history of architectural monuments also occurs in Doré's poster for a series of engravings on the theme, where stone statues come to life to curse the old man (fig. 123). This figure still clutches the moneybag, linking him to Judas's betrayal and to his nineteenth-century association with capital. As the contemporary *Archives israélites* put it, this popular myth signified "the image of the Jewish people, chased from their home for having not recognized Christ, wandering since then throughout the world, and carrying always, in spite of persecutions, their well-stuffed purse."[35] The more biting satire of Cham's parody shares with the Notre-Dame statue its earnest gaze and wild hair (fig. 124).

Of course, there were versions of the legend that were more blatantly anti-Semitic, notably Collin de Plancy's 1847 *Juif errant*, which describes the more stereotypical Jew as a crucifier and eater of children. The rise in popularity of the subject in the 1840s coincides with a period which historians have seen as decisive in the history of anti-Semitism in France. In the new republic of 1848 there were the first Jewish ministers: Michel Goudchaux was minister of finance and Adolphe Crémieux minister of justice. Even the socialist press was alarmed: "A Jew has slipped into the heart of government. . . . Justice is the religion of France; we do not wish its altars profaned by Jews; it is necessary that they be chased from them."[36]

A richly illuminated book of hours recently acquired by the Bibliothèque nationale has a whole series of miniatures which are late nineteenth-century forgeries placed in the probably unfinished spaces of an original fifteenth-century manuscript. One of these shows a miracle in which a hook-nosed Jew strikes a nail through a host he has stolen and it bleeds (fig. 125). Such overtly anti-Semitic images never appeared in books of hours in the Middle Ages. Moreover, this particular event, the miracle of the Convent of the Billettes in Paris, though alleged to have taken place

125. Late nineteenth-century forger: a Jew desecrates the host. Full-page miniature added to a fifteenth-century book of hours. BNF, MS Smith-Lesouef 317, fol. 13v. (Photo: BNF.)

in 1290, was popularized only through much later prints and paintings.[37] The book also includes a full-page image of stereotypical Jews crucifying a Christian child. This book of hours was forged, I believe, later in the nineteenth century during the Dreyfus trial. We might call it the "Anti-Dreyfus Hours," appealing to the tastes of some Parisians. It recalls the virulent anti-Semitic imagery found in Louis Veuillot's conservative Catholic newspaper *L'Univers*, which continued to perpetuate the libel that Jews demanded the "blood of Christian children."

Viollet-le-Duc's image of the old Jew is, by contrast, far less negative in its physical stereotyping. Without moneybag or any hint of malevolence, it suggests the milieu of the universalist periodical founded in 1834, *Le Juif errant, journal*. This used the idea of the wanderer to represent something dear to Viollet-le-Duc—progress itself. "The wandering Jew, according to what the priest believes, represents the Jewish race, eternally dispersed among the nations, without mixing with them, without becoming their sister, alone among the peoples of the earth, accomplishing thereby the prophecies of the divine curse. . . . For us, it is humanity who voyages, it is progress which marches, and that is why we have taken as our rallying cry this title, at once popular and symbolic of the future."[38] But the symbol of the future, if that is what was carved at Notre-Dame, has no legs to carry him forward on his journey. He can only gaze into the future below. If the wandering Jew represents the endless suffering of mankind, he can wander nowhere.

There may be less direct allusions to Jews in some of the other chimeras. One of the great iconographers of the period, the Jesuit father Charles Cahier, argued that night birds carved in medieval sculpture were symbols of Jews and that Israelite old-clothes dealers in nineteenth-century London continued to be mocked with the cries recalling the call of the owl.[39] It is hard for us to appreciate today the degree to which anti-Semitism was taken for granted in mid-nineteenth-century France, not least in writing the history of art and architecture. Daniel Ramée was an important architectural theorist and critic who wrote in addition to *Manuel de l'histoire générale de l'architecture chez tous les peuples* (1843), which was a source for Viollet-le-Duc's lay theory of Gothic architecture, an ambitious study entitled *Théologie cosmogonique ou reconstruction*

de l'ancienne et primitive loi (Paris, 1853). Here he not only made astonishing claims like "The thirteenth-century cathedral is not Christian."[40] He went on to fill his book with attacks on the inferior "Semitic race": "Arab-Semitic blood in Europe loves all that is hazardous." In an apologetic footnote he makes his excuses for being harsh in the course of his book to "the Phoenician-Semitic element, known under the name Jew in Europe," stating that among Jews there do exist "good and charitable men, etc. We ourselves know a good number of excellent ones."[41]

In his *Lectures on Architecture* where he discusses the chimeras of Notre-Dame, Viollet-le-Duc quotes the twelfth-century abbot of Cluny, Peter the Venerable, who described the civilized, enlightened and tolerant man as one for whom "there is neither Greek nor Jew; male nor female, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all and in all."[42] Of course, six centuries later, a sense of difference was unavoidable, even for a basically tolerant and progressive mind like Viollet-le-Duc's. What "is all and in all" is no longer a unifying and transcendent God but science, uncomprehending and unsentimental. Perhaps it is best to say that Viollet-le-Duc's dialectical imagination created two distinct and in a sense dialectically opposed images of the cursed race, both of which have their roots in an unfulfilled but always yearning Promethean quest for knowledge. One of these—the predominantly negative image representing the inscrutable, demonic, and despised Jew—became one of the most popular sculptures on the cathedral during the next hundred and fifty years, his racial otherness repressed. The other, more idealized image of the tragic, noble, victimized, exiled, and wandering Jew has been totally forgotten.

126. The squatting ape (no. 31), Notre-Dame, Paris. (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

III · *The Hairy Ape: Evolution*

The appearance of a "singe," or ape, among the creatures of the balustrade (no. 31) is especially significant in terms of the long tradition in which this animal was seen as a sign of the artist and even of art itself—"art the ape of nature."[43] Its tail, curled around its behind like a cushion, makes it a monkey rather than a chimpanzee or orangutan, although in nineteenth-century France these different categories were often confused (fig. 126). Viollet-le-Duc was a

careful taxonomist, however, and this animal with it doglike head and prehensile toes that grip the edge of the parapet is close to what the 1842 description of primates in the Jardin des plantes describes as *cynocephale*, or dog-headed monkeys, especially the papion, or *Choeropithecus sphinx*, of Egypt.[44] This Egyptian link adds another dimension to the enigmatic gaze of this sphinx-monkey, whose riddle is that it is so human. This is one of the few animals of all those on the balustrade not to be half-submerged in it. The creature has pulled itself up and sits precariously on the edge, watching. It is its pose which makes it preeminently human.

In the Middle Ages the representation of an earlier, primitive stage in human development had been embodied not in an animal but in a human form of atavism—the wild man. The hairy wild man had often been the subject of Gothic gargoyles and he appears wielding his club on a number of cathedrals as an exemplar of the uncivilized and half-human "other," one of the monstrous races living on the edges of the world (fig. 127).[45] In the nineteenth century the wild man was replaced by the ape-man—a geographic or spatial sense of difference was supplanted by a temporal scientific trajectory of historical time. The wild man still presupposes a notion of central, albeit aberrant, humanity, whereas the ape-man introduces the far more dangerous notion—that humanity is just a branch of animality. The discovery of the great apes—the chimpanzee and the gorilla in Africa and the orangutan in Southeast Asia—transformed the notion of man's primitive state. Even before Darwin the status of the ape between the human and the animal realms was hotly debated in France, especially in the writings of Jean-Baptiste Lamarck (1744–1829). Laurent Baridon has recently emphasized Viollet-le-Duc's debt to the thought of the great French zoologist Étienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire (1772–1844), especially the notion of the animal series, which brought back to life the old notion of the chain of being that linked all creatures together.[46] Viollet-le-Duc compared the development of the profile in Gothic architecture with the process by which "in the order of creation, comparative anatomy presents, in a succession of organized beings, a ladder, the degrees of which are hardly apparent, and which carries us, without interruption, from the reptile to man."[47] Saint-Hilaire, in positing his "theory of analogy" and the unity of all living things in 1833, had already declared that the ape was, as an organic structure, "très voisin de l'homme."[48] His protoevolutionary "transformisme," which detected similarities at the embryonic stage between different species, was opposed to the theories of Cuvier, who was an antievolutionist and a creationist. Catastrophes like the Flood had destroyed the lost species, and Cuvier saw no link between them and animals existing today. He looked at the same orangutan in the Jardin des plantes in 1830 as an example of the absolute separation of the species.

127. Wild man gargoyle holding tree, Senlis Cathedral, fifteenth century. (Photo: author.)

The word "singe" was also used by masons to describe the boss of the building

128. "Cain." From Johann Caspar Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy* (London, 1797). University of Chicago Library. (Photo: author.)

129. Cham [Amédée-Charles-Henri, comte de Noé], Vignette from *Physiologie des Champs Élysées* (Paris, 1842). (Photo: author.)

130. Viollet-le-Duc, caricature of Prosper Mérimée at the Libri trial, 1850. (Photo: from Auzas, "Viollet-le-Duc et Mérimée," 1965.)

site, so it may have had a very different meaning for the men who put it up there. For them it may have been a joke about the "master of the works," but for Viollet-le-Duc and other scientifically trained bourgeois, the ape had become a disturbing sign in its proximity to the human.[49] The contemplative ape, more human than a human being, is, like the melancholy demon, almost a contradiction in terms suggesting that Viollet-le-Duc was cognizant of the creature's potential as a sign of humanity rather than bestiality. Later in the 1870s Viollet-le-Duc revealed his acceptance of Darwin's theory of natural selection, in describing in his *Histoire d'un dessinateur* how man descended from the ape and how the ape's thumbless fingers eventually developed into the human apparatus "which allows you to draw" (qui te permet de dessiner) and how, "in man, the standing posture becomes normal, the arms are proportional, the head is strong, and the skull powerful."[50]

Self-reflection and powerful cranial capacity are emphasized in this chimera. Along with the pose, arms hugging the knees drawn up to the chest, these are the factors that make the creature seem human. It is the pose of the outcast Cain in Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy* (fig. 128). This pose was parodied in the popular *Physiologies* of the period as being typical of dreamy and ineffectual dandies and artists (fig. 129)—young poets staring off to the stars or into the abyss. We can see Viollet-le-Duc playing with the pose in some of his sketches, such as the one of his friend Prosper Mérimée sitting angrily at the Conciergerie during the trial of his friend Guglielmo Libri, who was convicted in absentia of stealing and selling rare books and manuscripts belonging to the state (fig. 130). I am not suggesting that the ape of Notre-Dame is meant to be a caricature of the great defender of medieval monuments and lifelong supporter of the architect but rather that its pose is inflected with

a self-conscious irony about the contemplation of the abyss, the infinite. This is a wonderfully romantic, not a medieval ape.

The ape is always grounded by its base materiality—its bottom. And this, too, clamps it to the stone parapet. It looks off and up into the distance, but it cannot escape its groundedness. For Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, professor of zoology at the Museum of Natural History at the Jardin des plantes, the orangutan, neither human nor simian, "forms a link between the two forms." The word "link," *anneau*, can also mean a ring, and one wonders whether Viollet-le-Duc had this term in mind when he created the creature seated on its own tail, which forms a ring around its posterior, almost like a cushion.[51] As a materialist Viollet-le-Duc would have wanted to link this ape to the human condition. Jack, the famous orangutan from the Jardin des plantes, was described as a "character"—remarkable "for his gentleness and amiability, and by the mixture of his manners, at the same time gauche and intelligent." This remarkable description continues, "When he sat he crossed his legs like Turks and tailors do, and in this attitude his physiognomy closely resembled those little figurines called magots in China."[52] Significantly, too, adult orangs are described as "sad and lazy."[53] His pose and position at the northeast corner of the inner tower looking over the spire as it rises in the very center of the cathedral cannot have been by chance. He looks east, toward his home and toward God. Was this human-ape meant to be seen anthropologically in terms of present time or historically, as referring to the past?

131. Ape-satyr (no. 24), Notre-Dame, Paris. (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

Another simian creature (no. 24) with a gaping mouth glares down from the south tower (fig. 131). This creature has less hair, his ribs protrude, and, like the squatting ape's, his arms are balanced on the parapet in a very human fashion. This sculpture recalls chimpanzees and orangutans, which were considered close to man. The chimera is sometimes called the satyr and the scientific name for the orangutan was *Pithecus satyricus*. Travelers like Tisch brought back tales of meeting orangutans who were able to converse and take tea in a civilized manner. A contemporary guide to the Jardin des plantes describes the chimpanzee as "of all apes that which most closely resembles man in its exterior. It is nearly carved from the same model, but its ears are larger . . . its nose . . . nearly nonexistent."[54] In many earlier travel accounts indigenous peoples and in particular black Africans were described as the human types closest to apes and even put forward by scientists like Linnaeus as the missing link between apes and human. Henry Lichtenstein, in his *Travels in South Africa* of 1812, described how "one of our present guests . . . had the true physiognomy of the small blue ape of Caffraria."[55]

All this raises the question of whether these sculptures were seen as representations of modern savages or of missing links on the evolutionary chain. That this was an anxiety in French intellectual circles even before Darwin's *Origin of Species* began

to have an impact in France in the later 1860s is suggested by *Paris avant les hommes*, by the botanist and geologist Pierre Boitard (1788–1859), published posthumously in 1861. Here the frontispice shows an early inhabitant of Paris, an ape-man defending his cave with an axe (fig. 132). In this fascinating work, which we shall return to again later in this chapter, the author is taken back in time (by a demon) to see prehistoric man living among monsters but describes early humans as the most disgusting of all creatures he sees. His demonic guide leads him to a cave where, signaling him to be silent, he lifts back a bearskin to reveal

> the most singular and horrible animals I had seen until then. There were three of them, two large, and a small one that I recognized as the young of this horrible species. The male . . . had the build of an average bear, and all its body was completely covered with sleek, brown hair that was fairly short and a little bushy. . . . Its body had rather the form of an orangutan, but without being either nimble or graceful, because it was stout, squat, and thickly muscular. . . . It was the head of this animal that was the most horrible. A spiky mane entirely covered his skull and a great part of his face, in a way that one could not see, across this woolly forest, the two enormous lips that terminated in a large projecting snout, which was itself covered with a second reddish mane, shaggy, full of filth, blood, and little bits of dried-up flesh. A little above these gross, brown-red lips appeared two oval holes that I recognized as nostrils, although they were not surmounted by any protuberance that could be compared to a nose.[56]

Waking up the family of these creatures, the author is attacked by the male with his flint axe and comes to the terrible realization that "the most dangerous species of all among the monsters . . . is man." The demon guide tells him that he has encountered "un homme fossile," and he asks why the creature resembles an ape and has so much hair and a prominent muzzle. He is told that "many individuals, even in France, are nearly as hairy as apes" and not only that the cranial extension of the muzzle is visible in fossil skulls discovered in America and Austria but also that certain "Negroid Ethiopans" today still present the same features.[57] Such texts raise fascinating questions about the simian chimeras of Notre-Dame. Were they meant to refer to the currently debated origins of man? Moreover, were their physiognomic peculiarities not also signs of racial otherness making these monsters into atavistic apparitions, not only of prehistory, but also of colonial expansion?

Violllet-le-Duc had a much less pessimistic view of human evolution and its possible future than Boitard's ominous vision of Paris before man. In "Are These Men?" the first chapter of one of his last works, *Histoire de l'habitation humaine* (1875), early humans escape their animal condition in caves, rising above nature by creating from

132. "Fossil Man." From Pierre Boitard, *Paris avant les hommes*, 1861. (Photo: author.)

108 MAGASIN PITTORESQUE.
FANTAISIE.
Par J.-J. Grandville.
L'HOMME DESCEND VERS LA BRUTE.
Première tête. — Sera-t-il bon? sera-t-il méchant? Qui peut rien affirmer encore? Son avenir dépendra surtout de son éducation. Cependant je n'aime pas ce regard, ce sourcil; il y a là le germe de quelque mauvaise passion.
Deuxième tête. — Le germe fatal s'est développé. Les traits expriment déjà l'entraînement au mal, la violence du caractère, la méchanceté, le désordre.
Troisième tête. — Tout est perdu! Le vice domine: il est le maître absolu de cet homme, et lui a déjà imprimé sur la face ses stigmates flétrissants.
Quatrième tête. — Arrivé à l'excès, le vice perd son énergie. Les muscles se détendent; l'abrutissement commence.
Cinquième tête. — La dégradation est à son dernier terme; les dernières lueurs de l'intelligence se sont éteintes. Est-ce là un homme? est-ce une bête?

133. J.-J. Grandville, "Man Descends toward the Brute." From *Magasin pittoresque*, vol. 14 (1843). (Photo: author.)

it the first primitive dwellings. The two protagonists who take us on this architectural journey through time are not demons but two of these early humans who represent on the one hand progress and science and on the other tradition and the sacred—Epergos, the radical, and Doxi, the conservative. When humans build their first hut, Doxi asks, Why modify the works of the Creator? Epergos replies that "these beings are not animals." "Nonsense," replies Doxi.[58]

If evolution was a theory that allowed the "othering" of certain groups across time, this naturally raised anxieties about the future. Already in 1843 in the *Magasin pittoresque* Grandville could suggest a kind of antievolution with his witty wood engraving "L'Homme descend vers la brute" (fig. 133). The human here does not develop from the ape but declines into the ape, as the child grows into the simian old man. The text above describes the head of the child that initiates the sequence on the upper left as neither good nor evil: "His future will depend above all on his education" (Son avenir dépendra surtout de son éducation), the obsession of the age. However, in the eyebrow there is already detected "the seed of some evil passion" (le germe de quelque mauvaise passion). This fatal germ has already developed in the second adult head and by the third "All is lost! Vice dominates!" (Tout est perdu! Le vice domine!). In the fourth there is the arrival of excess and "l'abrutissement commence" and with the final image we are asked, "Is this a man? Is this a beast?" (Est-ce là un homme? Est-ce une bête?). This reversed evolution, an atavistic return to a primal state of bestiality, is what Viollet-le-Duc's sad old ape-man, in my view, comments upon. Does he gaze toward the bright future of man or longingly toward a sacred order from which he is excluded?

IV · *The Cretin Unicorn: Degeneration*

According to Roger Caillois the monstrous can only appear "after the triumph of the scientific conception of a rational order."[59] During the Middle Ages the monstrous had been kept at a distance, on the edge of world maps, the margins of books and buildings, as signs and wonders in God's enigmatic creation. By contrast, the nineteenth-century scientific imagination peered fascinatedly at pinheads, giants, and dwarves—bringing them closer to attention and visual scrutiny. They became objects of knowledge. It is this visual evidence, if you like the authenticity and veracity of the monster, which gives some of Viollet-le-Duc's chimeras a different charge from their medieval counterparts. One of the most horrific of the chimeras of Notre-Dame has the body of a human hunchback, mad, glaring eyes, elongated sharp ears of the nonhuman, and a single horn rising like a malformation on his head (no. 21; fig. 134). He also bears the bulbous cranium associated in mid-nineteenth-century medical discourse with conditions like cretinism, which were associated with atavistic theories of human degeneration. Cretinism was a major medical mystery in the 1840s and the subject of various official studies. With the role of iodine deficiency yet to be discovered, investigations into the disorder focused on the cranial deformities and was thus linked to phrenology. Bénédict Augustin Morel, director of the Saint Yon asylum, based his concept of degeneracy on his study of cretinism, published in 1857 as *Traité des dégénérescences physiques, intellectuelles, et morales de l'espèce humaine*. Morel's treatise, with its themes of alchoholism, crime, cretinism, sterility, and insanity, saw human degeneration as an inevitable product of the repetition of revolution, the cursed lineage of 1789.[60] Moreover, Morel's study was illustrated with carefully observed engravings of his patients, whose "obtuse intelligence" is clearly on display. In plate 10 Georges, a "born fool," has his mouth wide open, like so many of the screaming chimeras of the cathedral (fig. 135). Another figure on the same plate, a young "idiot" called Jacques, with his "angled forehead" and both hands resting on the horizontal surface before him, seems uncannily close to both the unicorn chimera

134. Unicorn demon (no. 21), Notre-Dame, Paris. MAP CNMHS. (Photo: Jannie Mayer.)

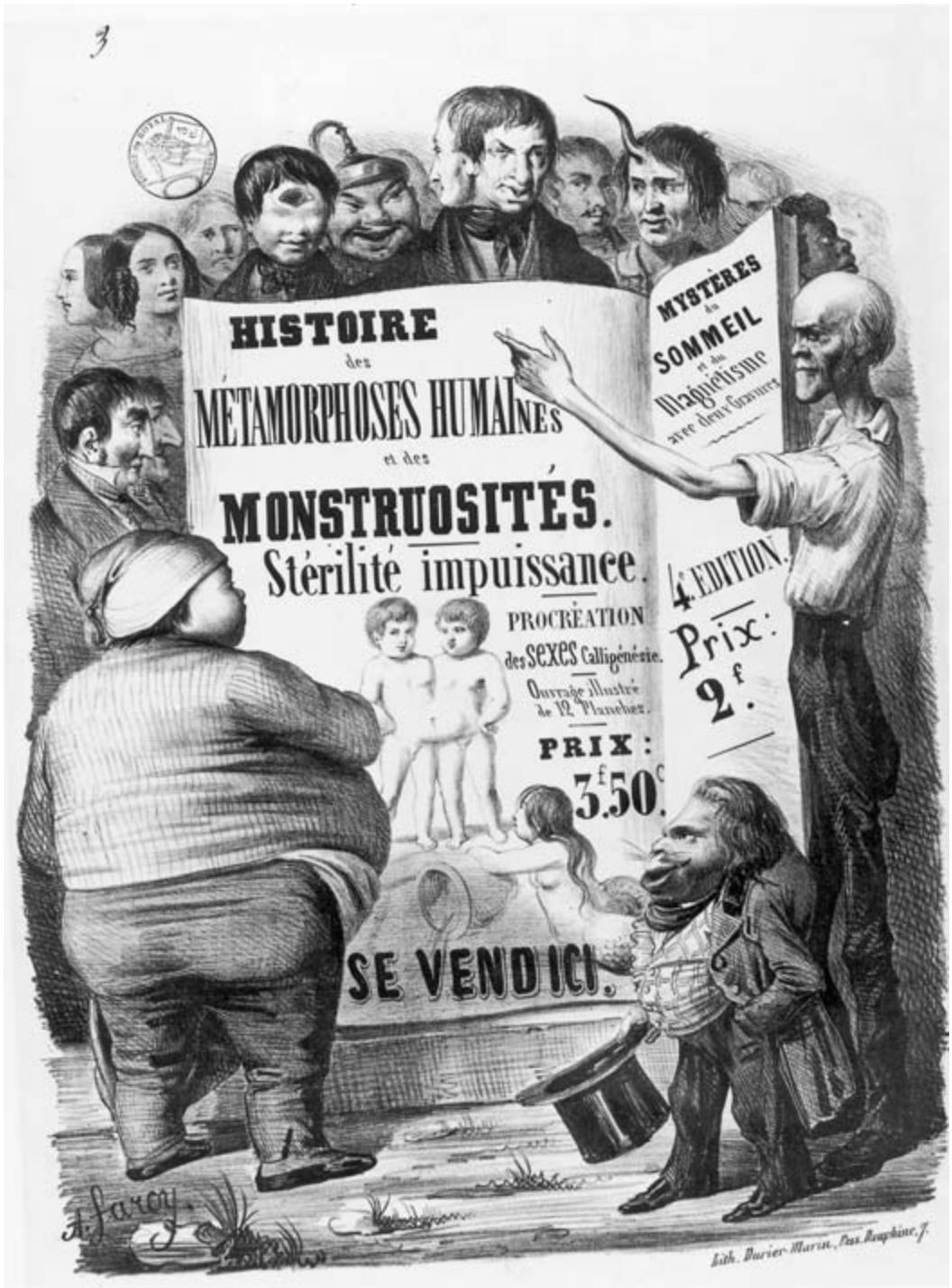
135. "Vicious Conformations of the Head." From Bénédict Augustin Morel, *Traité des dégénérescences physiques, intellectuelles, et morales de l'espèce humaine et des causes qui produisent ces variété maladives* (Paris, 1857), pl. 10. (Photo: author.)

and to the demon squashing a toad, designed by Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc (no. 54). This plate could not have been a model for the restorers, whose drawings date from nearly a decade earlier. The point is that this new medicalizing discourse was changing the way people saw such monsters. In 1847–48, when Lassus made his drawing of the demonic imp (see fig. 51), it was just another pseudomedieval grotesque. In the years that followed such malformations became more disturbing. Was this the reason why Viollet-le-Duc eventually placed this particular chimera, originally designed for the facade, in a less prominent position?

A contemporary poster shows how much not only professional medical discourse like Morel's, but also the popular imagination combined the appearance of anomalies like horned people and hunchbacks with fears about reproduction (fig. 136). A single-horned man at the left stands alongside a cyclops, a dwarf, a giant, and a chinaman in a print advertising *Histoire des Métamorphoses humaines et des monstrusités: Stérilité impuissance, procréation des sexes, calligénérie*. On the streets of the city and in fairgrounds freaks of nature were especially popular in this period. Aberrations of deformity and sad remnants of humanity were displayed for the gaze of the new consumer, especially under the July Monarchy. This was just a popular version of what was being put on display at another spectacular show of nature's strangeness—the Jardin des plantes, where the science of teratology, of monsters, was especially developed in the writings and research of Étienne (1772–1844) and Isidore (1805–61) Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire. Medieval monsters had not been biological. They were cultural creations, myths that answered to people's needs to create boundaries around the known world and others. Augustine in *The City of God* saw them as signs: "The name 'monster' we are told, evidently comes from *monstrare* 'to show' because they show by signifying something."[61] The anomaly, because it was a sign, could also become an object of aesthetic pleasure, a wonder of nature that was significant precisely because it was inexplicable.

The wondrous pleasure in monstrosity did not disappear, however. Paul-Ernst de Rattier's *Paris n'existe pas*, published in 1857, describes how

> the true Paris is full of freak shows, repositories at three centimes a night for unheard-of beings and human phantasmagorias. . . . There, in a cloud of ammoniac vapor, . . . and on beds that have not been made since the Creation, reposing side by side are hundreds, thousands of charlatans, of match sellers, of accordion players, of hunchbacks, of the blind and the lame; of dwarfs, legless cripples, and men whose noses were bitten off in quarrels, of rubber-jointed men, clowns making a comeback, and sword-swallowers; of jugglers who balance a greasy pole on the tips of their teeth . . . ; children with four legs, Basque giants and other kinds, Tom Thumb in his twentieth reincarnation, plant people



136. "Histoire des métamorphoses humaines et des monstruosités." Lithograph. BNF.

137. "He is not stuffed; you will see him tying his shoelaces without bending over; come and see; enter and see; he is there—he is alive!" 1830s. Lithograph. BNF.

> whose hand or arm is the soil of a living tree, which sprouts each year on its crown of branches and leaves; walking skeletons, transparent humans made of light . . . ; orangutans with human intelligence; monsters who speak French.[62]

During the early years of the July Monarchy the fictional hunchbacked dwarf M. Mayeux appears in a fairground spectacle as a representative of the people. A print called "Le Veritable Mayeux" shows another freak show in which the famous dwarf is being presented to the crowd (fig. 137). A barker points to a poster of Mayeux, a bird, and a camel, while an ape sits on the railing, and cries, "See the famous Mayeux—he is not stuffed; you will see him tying his shoelaces without bending over; come and see; enter and see; he is there—he is alive!"[63] Mayeux, like Hugo's Quasimodo, was an adorable rogue with whom the audience was meant to identify, but twenty years later such physical deformity, his simian qualities, placed him in a more dangerous category. The deformed person was to become what Foucault calls the "moral monster" (le monstre moral) of the nineteenth century.[64]

Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, the son of Étienne, defined monsters as grave anomalies, not created by God but caused by a shock to the mother during pregnancy.[65] But rather than make the monster innocent, its biological formation in the tainted womb served only to mark it as within the process of generation as degenerate—as deviant. Even the scientist had to admit the power of the monster to attract the gaze. "The word monster, after its etymology . . . should not only be applied to those beings remarkable enough to attract attention, to vividly strike the

spirits of spectators. . . . A monster is, for the vulgar, a being whose appearance astonishes, and nearly always offends the sight."[66]

In 1844 the comic genius of Grandville satirized the scientist's teratological researches in his *Un Après-Midi au Jardin des plantes*, in which creatures with heads at both ends called "doublivores" and other "hybrids" created by the crossing of species, like the rabbit-snail, the giraffe-scarab-beetle, and the butterfly-snail, suggest not mere embryological shock but a total and traumatic transformation of the normal into the abnormal (fig. 138). Barbara Stafford suggests that "the monster . . . interrupts through glaring excess or defect the plenitude of succession" and that it represents "the true face of imagery, not as verbal continuum, but as thought-provoking simultaneity. . . . The monster incarnated illegitimacy."[67] If the medieval gargoyle had been innocent, at least in its birth, as a proper species of dragon or whatever creature—the hybridity of the one-horned chimera places it within the category of the anomalous, the degenerate, even of the criminal.

In these years such monstrosities might also be seen in terms of inbreeding; indeed, in theories of the decline of the aristocracy's birthrates and bloodlines this was an often-discussed problem. An article appearing in the 1846 *Annales d'hygiène publique et de médecine légale* argued that the inability of noble families to maintain their bloodlines was brought on by overindulgence in food and sex, which caused the vital spirit of this once ruling elite to ebb away.[68] But increasingly after 1848 the fear of decline came from below rather than above. And it was mixture, the combination of different racial groups that should be kept separate, that was greeted with most fear. Dr. Jean-Christian-Marc-François-Joseph Boudin in his *Traité de géographie et de statistique médicales* of 1857 wrote that "the crossbreeding of mankind does not order itself like that of the beast" (le croisement de l'homme ne se commande pas comme celui de la brute), citing many examples of interracial sterility. Hybrids like mulattoes were considered by many medical writers to be sterile. Paul Broca in his *Recherches sur l'hybridité animale en général et sur l'hybridité humane en particulier* (1860) also underlines that the physical difference between races is evidence for their separate origins.[69] At the end of the previous century Edward Long had argued that the Creator had meant the three types of the species *homo*,

138. J.-J. Grandville, "Monstrous Hybrids at the Jardin des plantes." From *Un Autre Monde*, 1844. (Photo: author.)

Europeans, Negroes, and orangutans, to remain separate, and nothing but sterility is a product of any union across groups.[70] Art too was meant to be pure. Michelet wrote in the tumultuous year 1848 that only France represented the organic unity of an antique statue of a Venus or Hercules compared to the heteroclite and inferior monstrosity of Prussia, Italy, or Spain.[71] Lamarckism, the theory that characteristics acquired during the lifetime of the parent could be passed down to its offspring, was in the air and meant that a monster was no longer thought of as an aberration or a sign sent by God but as a pathology visible in the biology of an individual. Crime, suicide, alchoholism, and prostitution were understood as "social pathologies" endangering the European races, constituting a degenerative process within them. Claude-Marie Raudot's *De la décadence de la France* (1850) argued that the communism and revolution fostered in Paris were evidence that the very brain and heart of the country had fallen into sickness and madness.[72]

The idea of madness helped structure a range of responses to the chimeras in the second half of the century. I shall discuss this in the second part of this book, but it is important to see how medicalization of the monsters of Notre-Dame began. A fundamental change in the understanding of monstrosity began around midcentury, a change which occurred just as the sculptures were being conceived and created by Viollet-le-Duc. The wondrous was replaced by the anomalous. This also involved a change in the location of monstrosity itself—from being a part of God's predestined plan to the disturbed mind of the individual. No longer recognizable by the clear exterior signs of physiognomy, the monster became terrifyingly ambiguous. This radical shift in ideas is charted by Foucault in *Les Anormaux* in describing the famous case of François Bertrand, the "vampire of Montparnasse," whose story filled the newspapers in the years 1847–49.[73]

During the very year that Viollet-le-Duc was designing and Pyanet was carving the medievalizing melancholy demon later known as "le Stryge," or "the Vampire," Paris was haunted by an actual vampire who had been prowling graveyards and sucking the blood of corpses. A twenty-five-year-old sergeant major called François Bertrand was finally caught and put on trial by a military court in July 1849. He admitted to having delighted in mutilation from an early age and to having violent masturbatory fantasies which involved playing with entrails and violating cadavers, mostly female.[74] A debate ensued between the legal and medical experts about how to understand the case. Dr. Claude François Michéa, secretary of the Medico-Psychological Society wrote that rather than a vampire—one of the dead who feeds off the living—Bertrand was a reverse vampire, driven by his animal instincts to live off the dead. Another expert, Dr. Felix Jacquot, wrote in the *Gazette médicale de*

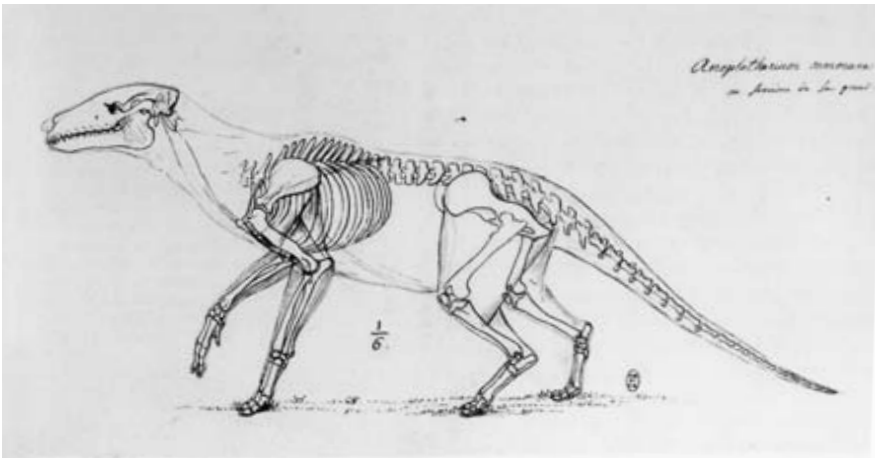
Paris that this case showed that the line between the normal and the pathological was becoming increasingly difficult to define. After all, he argued, were not similar violent erotic practices like pederasty commonly practiced among celibate all-male societies of Muslims, military men, and priests? Although the word "necrophilia" had not yet been invented, the vampire of Montparnasse was one of the first cases of the perversification of erotic desire. But what most shocked the public and amazed journalists was that Bertrand was a model soldier, an ex-seminarian, and appeared in court as a slim, handsome man with "lively yet melancholy eyes." Eventually found guilty, not of erotic monomania, which was the diagnosis of the medicolegal experts, but of criminal violation of the sanctity of mortal remains, he was sentenced to a year in prison. It is not surprising in this newly charged atmosphere of psychological pathology that the winged demon with his inscrutable gaze, elegant hands, and beautiful cheekbones, rather than the physically deformed cretin unicorn, became the most popular of all the demons of Notre-Dame. In creating this vision of depraved beauty Viollet-le-Duc was responding not just to a nostalgic and romantic Hugolian model of the diabolically debonaire, but also to current views of monstrosity, which located the dangers of desire less and less in the body and more and more in the mind.

V · *Stones and Bones: Paleontology*

> When will our poor school see the rise of its own Cuvier to instruct us in the comparative anatomy of ancient and modern monuments and to teach us that we must not put the feet of a rabbit on the body of a monkey.
>
> VIOLLET-LE-DUC, *"Essai sur l'origine et les développements de l'art de bâtir en France"*[75]

The chimeras of Notre-Dame are fossil remains. The prominent dragon with his coiled tongue and bent-back arms (fig. 139) was, like most of the chimeras, carved from geologic deposits millions of years old and contains in its body the microscopic bodies of thousands of extinct creatures far stranger than itself. The chimeras were carved from Tertiary limestone quarried around Soissons, one of eighteen different types of stone used in the restoration of the cathedral. The lintel of the Last Judgment in the central portal of the facade is from even finer Lutetian limestone of the Tertiary strata which Viollet-le-Duc had dug from the quarries at Marly-la-Ville (Val d'Oise). This is the material from which most of nineteenth-century Paris is built and in which Georges Cuvier (1769–1832) had discovered hundreds of species of extinct marine genera. In the overlaying formation of gypsum, used in the manufacture of

139. Dragon with bent arms (no. 18). Notre-Dame, Paris. (Photo: Stuart Michaels.)



140. Georges Cuvier, drawing of *Anoplotherium medium*, one of the fossil mammals from the gypsum around Paris. John Crerar Collection, University of Chicago Library. (Photo: author.)

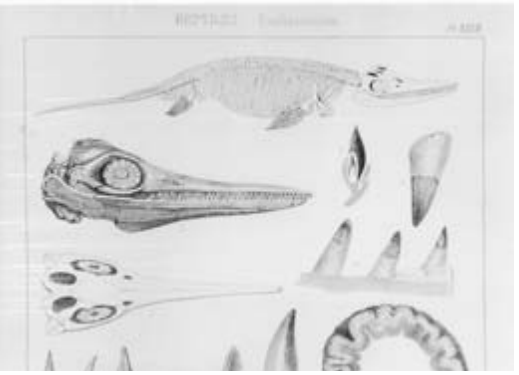
plaster of Paris, he had found the bones of two extinct mammals, which he went on to reconstruct (fig. 140).[76] Cuvier and Alexandre Brongniart's study of the formations around Paris used the evidence of invertebrate fossils to reconstruct a complex history of alternating marine and freshwater conditions for the area. Moreover, their evidence transformed the concept of the earth's "revolutions," which maintained that geologic changes had been caused by historical catastrophes, by revealing long periods of calm in the earth's history through their investigations of the rock strata around Paris.[77] The acceptance of the notion of extinction—that fossils belonged to truly extinct species and not, as previously believed, species still lurking in the earth's unexplored corners—transformed the notion of monstrosity into a phase of historical past. Even more significant, that past was visible, in Cuvier's words, in the region "in which this capital is situated," which was "the most remarkable that has yet been observed."[78] This raises the question of whether the beasts of the balustrade were conceived not only as mythical or legendary creatures but also as those actual extinct animals made newly known to the world through paleontological analysis and the reconstruction of fossil remains. Are some of them the great reptiles that once roamed the Paris basin in deep time? They certainly share with many of the popular engravings of the period the scaly surfaces, spiny backs, fangs, and tusks of the prehistoric creatures depicted, often with a good deal of fantasy. When these sculptures were made, enormous dragons were not just the stuff of medieval legends, but the very bones constituting the new science of paleontology. When Viollet-le-Duc wrote that he hoped for an archaeological Cuvier to rationalize the organic forms of archi-

tecture, it was 1852—the year the chimeras were put in place—and it is clear that this was a rhetorical question, since he was that man.[79]

Contemporaries were noticing the monstrous additions to Notre-Dame in terms of science. Fernand Boissard in *L'Illustration* compared the way the young restorers had worked "by means of the same admirable spirit of induction that allowed Cuvier to reconstruct an antediluvian animal by the inspection of only a single tooth or one of its vertebrae."[80] Fossils are in a sense fragments that have to be restored before they can become legible, like the bones of the Egyptian ibis discussed by Cuvier that became clearly comprehensible only after being reassembled as a skeleton (fig. 141). Cuvier opens his *Essay on the Theory of the Earth* by arguing that his work on fossil bones makes him "an antiquary of a new order, I was obliged at once to learn the art of restoring these monuments of past revolutions to their original forms, and to discover their nature and relations. I had to collect and bring together in their original order, the fragments of which they constituted; to reconstruct, as it were, the ancient beings to which these fragments belonged; to reproduce them with all their proportions and characters."[81] This was exactly Viollet-le-Duc's argument for his reconstruction of the beasts of Notre-Dame—that he had found some fragmentary remains where they once gripped the parapet and from these had "reproduced them." Even some of the formal aspects of the chimeras, especially the reptilian birds (no. 1; fig. 142), are reminiscent of contemporary paleontological publications (fig. 143). Cuvier disagrees with but describes the hypothesis that "among those animals which we presume to be fabulous, we may perhaps discover, when we become better acquainted with them, the originals of those bones of unknown animals which we discover buried in the earth."[82] Anna Jameson, in her widely read *Sacred and Legendary Art* (1848), said the origin of certain monsters represented in medieval art could be found in the prehistoric Silurian remains of monsters dug up in the Middle Ages. "At Aix a huge fossilized head of one of the Sauri was for a long time preserved as the head of the identical dragon subdued by St. Martha. . . . Profesor Owen told me that the head of a dragon in one of the legendary pictures he had seen in Italy closely resembled in form that of the *Deinotherium Giganteum*."[83] But against ideas like this Cuvier argues that the fabulous monsters of antiquity are purely mythological: "For in almost all of them we see merely parts of known animals united by an unbridled imagination, and in contradiction to all the laws of nature. Those which were invented or arranged by the Greeks, have at least the merit of possessing elegance in their composition. . . . We may excuse those who employ their time in attempts to discover the wisdom concealed in the sphinx of Thebes, the Pegasus of Thessalay, the Minotaur of Crete, or the chimera of Epirus; but it would be absurd to expect seriously to find such productions in nature." Comparative anatomy meant

141. The skeleton of the Egyptian ibis reconstructed by Cuvier from mummified remains. John Crerar Collection, University of Chicago Library. (Photo: author.)

142. Bird with teeth (no. 1). Notre-Dame, Paris. (Photo: Roger Viollet.)



143. Ichthyosaurus. From François-Jules Pictet, *Traité de paléontologie*, 1853–57. John Crerar Collection, University of Chicago Library. (Photo: author.)

the opposite of hybrid multiplicity and mixing—it meant clear categorization: the mutual relation of forms in organized beings, by means of which each species might be determined, with perfect certainty, by any fragment of any of it parts. Cuvier has many pages discussing the fabled unicorn and its relation to the actual Indian ass or *monoceros* and *rhinoceros*. Viollet-le-Duc's hybrid unicorn is a spinally deformed and leering thing, hunched over as if with age, and ultimately far from both zoology and the medieval fantasy of the lovely, lovesick beast we know from the unicorn tapestries. But it presents a notion of nature closer to Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire's transformist notion of animal series which argued for the connectedness of forms rather than their separation.

In his entry on sculpture in the *Dictionnaire* Viollet-le-Duc, unlike Cuvier, discusses the natural history of unreal creatures such as "le *griffon*, la *wivre*, la *caladre*, la *harpie*, la *sirène*" and "le *dragon*." "Why do these animals, real or fabulous, thus come to diplay themselves on the exterior ledges of edifices, particularly of our great cathedrals?" His first answer is that the school of architects who he believed created these buildings sought to create a veritable "encyclopédie" of all creation. A second reason is more interesting in terms of the racial theories which are the focus of this chapter, for in the stone bestiaries carved on the cathedrals he finds "the still appreciable trace of the splendid pantheism of the Aryans" and "traditions de race"

which are residual even within Christianity. For Viollet-le-Duc the bestiary visible on the exterior of the cathedrals, like that he himself created at Notre-Dame, is a place where "the complete order, natural and supernatural, physical and immaterial, develops, like in a book."[84] Far from being the traditional "book of the universe" described by twelfth-century writers like Alan of Lille, a book of revelation revealed by God alone, this nineteenth-century book is a multivolumed enlightenment encyclopedia of things knowable to humanity, not unlike his own *Dictionnaire*. In the first volume of the *Dictionnaire*, which he was working on during the restoration of the chimeras and which was published in 1854, Viollet-le-Duc rejected both the symbolic and folkloric interpretation of monsters for one based on their "physiognomie." In his entry on animals from the first volume, he describes those represented in Gothic art as "a natural history in which all individuals are classed according to species." He goes on to describe the stranger forms such as those of gargoyles in positive terms: "The limbs of these bizarre creatures are always well attached, rendered with verity; their contours are simple and recall the grace that one never tires of admiring in animals of the feline race, in birds of prey, and among certain reptiles."[85] Never once in the documents or published accounts does their creator ever refer to them as anything other than "beasts" or "animals," and only rarely as chimeras. It seems as though at times Viollet-le-Duc regarded the beasts and their like not as monsters at all, but as living and viable specimens in the natural history of the earth.

But the monsters seem to haunt the clear categories of those ten volumes just as they cling tenaciously to the parapet of Notre-Dame. He describes the head of a gargoyle from the Sainte-Chapelle (fig. 144) as having a kind of historical authenticity, like the prehistoric species reconstructed by Cuvier: "This unnatural fauna possesses its well-defined anatomy, which gives it the appearance of reality. One thinks to see in these stone bestiaries a lost creation, but proceeding with the logic imposed on all natural creations. The sculptors of the thirteenth century have produced in this genre works of art of an incontestable value, and without making too much of these works, we will give here as a specimen the head of one of the gargoyles of the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris that no Greek artist would disclaim. It is difficult to push any further the study of nature applied to a being that does not exist."[86] It is exactly this type of open-mouthed, streamlined head with deep-set ears that Viollet-le-Duc used in making his own gargoyles, both the projecting waterspouts proper and the reptilian heads that cluster underneath the balustrade in a horde of monsters seemingly deposited in a lower sedimentary layer of the great stone structure (fig. 145). In the *Dictionnaire* article "Gargoyle" Viollet-le-Duc criticizes many modern "pastiches" placed on Gothic buildings as "too heavy, too thin, or soft in form, poor in invention and without character." They lack this "real" feeling visible in the older examples.

144. Viollet-le-Duc, drawing of a gargoyle from the Sainte-Chapelle. From *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française*, 8:248. (Photo: author.)

145. View of the balustrade looking north in the early twentieth century. (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

They are all too often "ridiculous, even impossible beings, gross caricatures, lacking any style."[87] This is not really true of the early thirteenth century, when gargoyles were first being utilized. These earliest gargoyles were ascribable to no particular species. The mid-nineteenth-century bestiary, however, was not the medieval one. The chimeras are not akin to their medieval forebears in one fundamental respect: they are realistic in their representation but they are not real in their social function. They are not so much extinct beasts as fauna that no one believes in any more.

A medieval chimera still sticks its nose out at ground level on the lower socle of the entrance portal to Senlis Cathedral near the cycle of the labors of the months, the fallen beast of nature, ejected from the sacred and yet a crucial sign of its presence (fig. 146). Typical of the monstrosity found in images around the year 1200, this dragon combines all matter—animal, vegetable, and mineral—in a superb dragonish snout, gripping claws, and majestic, eaglelike wings. It is a superb composite—a true chimera in the sense that no one animal species predominates. Indeed, the crucial difference between medieval and modern monstrosity is that the medieval hybrid was created in a period before the idea of distinct genera and taxonomies had actually been developed. Precisely because the beasts on the balustrade are more one thing

146. Chimera on the socle on the left of the central portal of the west facade of Senlis Cathedral, late twelfth century. (Photo: author.)

147. Viollet-le-Duc, chimera from the northeast courtyard staircase at Pierrefonds, 1866. (Photo: author.)

than another—predominantly lion or in some cases completely boar—they work quite differently on the imagination. When Viollet-le-Duc was free to make his most "realistic" monstrous forms later, in the more clearly paleontological decor that decorated the courtyard of the emperor's chateau at Pierrefonds, the frog-pelican chimera with its dinosaur-like bat's wings, for example (fig. 147), the results are more successful because this creature explodes, like the art of Grandville, Cuvier's fixity of species.[88]

We should not separate the realms of scientific thought and culture in this period, or limit the capacity of science itself to utilize elements of fantasy. This is evident in Pierre Boitard's *Paris avant les hommes*, which gives a strange twist to the notion that the horned demon has looked down on Paris since the begining of time. In the book the author is conducted on a tour of deep time by none other than Asmodée, the lame demon (*le diable boiteux*), borrowed from Alain-René Lesage's popular novel of 1707. The two ride a meteorite and travel through time in order to survey the city, not from a bird's-eye view but from a pterodactyl's-eye view. This juxtaposition of romantic all-seeing devil viewing the world from above and prehistoric dinosaurs is very relevant to understanding the balustrade of Notre-Dame, where the demon and the monster share the

148. Meeting with a plesiosauraus. From Pierre Boitard, *Paris avant les hommes*, 1861. John Crerar Collection, University of Chicago Library.

same space. We have already seen Boitard's description of "fossil man" (fig. 132), which is far more terrifying than the dinosaur he encounters earlier in the story (fig. 148).

> I saw again a fern of the preceding period, and I wanted to get nearer this tree, the roots of which were in the water; I was already putting out my hand to pluck a leaf, which I intended for the herbarium of the Museum of Natural History in Paris, when a sharp menacing whistle could be heard nearby. I recoiled in terror on seeing the scaly head of a horrible reptile looking at me with flashing eyes. Its open mouth, filled with sharp teeth, menaced me with a forked sting; its neck was of a prodigious length, like a cable, or rather, a huge snake; it massive body, covered with large, yellowish scales, was rather like that of an enormous fish; but it had four short legs, of which the digits were covered with a thick membrane, which gave them some resemblance to those of a sea turtle; the short stout tail of a crocodile served it as a rudder.
>
> "It's a plesiosaur," said the genie.
>
> "It's a strange monster, the form of which is so fantastic that, if I hadn't seen it with my own two eyes, it would seem the product of the delirious imagination of a poet, rather than of the hand of nature."
>
> "It would appear to me to be a chimerical being," said the demon, "if one did not often find its early complete fossil skeleton in many countries of Europe and even in France."[89]

The demon goes on to quote Cuvier on the chain of vertebrate animals leading to diverse intermediate forms and finally up to "the more complete forms of animality such as exist today." The illustration of this scene—engraved by Gustave Moreau after the author's own drawing, showing this creature's composite form, half snake with forked tongue and half turtle—cannot escape the crude combinative conventions of monstrous representation. Though Cuvier would like to keep separate the monsters of myth and the material evidence of prehistoric creatures, the two are always being mixed up. The same is true of our own era's obsession with fantasy dinosaurs. It is precisely this overlap between myth and monstrosity that drew Viollet-le-Duc to imagining the world not only as it was in the Mid-

dle Ages, but also as it was before man, and to make his restored cathedral, through its monsters, refer to deep geologic time.

In the prologue to his *Histoire de l'habitation humaine*, Viollet-le-Duc describes two angelic beings witnessing the creation of the world from the top of a mountain "pensively contemplating the vast landscape which stretches before them." In the dank and watery world they hear the hierarchy of creation from lowest to highest, before man came on the scene—"the croaking of batrachians, the hissing of reptiles, the lowings and bleatings of ruminants, the hoarse roar of mammoths, and the cries of large birds. 'All is as it should be,'" says Doxius, the keeper of tradition and the high priest. "'Nothing is complete,'" returns Épergos, the active will, the technician who seeks always to improve things and whose aim to improve on nature represents Viollet-le-Duc's optimistic, rationalist philosophy of history.[90] The question of the first appearance of men and whether they coexisted with the extinct creatures discovered through the fossil evidence was hotly debated throughout the century. One of his drawings shows a similar long-necked dinosaur and an extinct mammal first discovered and drawn by Cuvier, the *Paleotherium*, inscribed "Some of the animals which Noah did not judge proper to be admitted into the ark."[91] Martin J. S. Rudwick has described nineteenth-century pictorial representations of prehistoric life as generating "a vivid sense of 'wonder' of deep time in the literate mass public that was emerging in just this period. It is no coincidence that the same public was also becoming aware of the 'romance' of *human* history, not least of the 'otherness' of the Middle Ages."[92] In contrast to the terrifying alterity described by Boitard's nightmarish visions, the monsters of the Middle Ages were positively charming. However, the two discourses, of science and of the Gothic revival, are intimately connected. If some of the creatures of the balustrade are meant to represent not just creatures of the medieval imagination, but extinct forms of life reemerging in the stone remains, the continuity Viollet-le-Duc had described as the "ladder . . . which carries us, without interruption, from the reptile to man" was made manifest in the chimeras.[93]

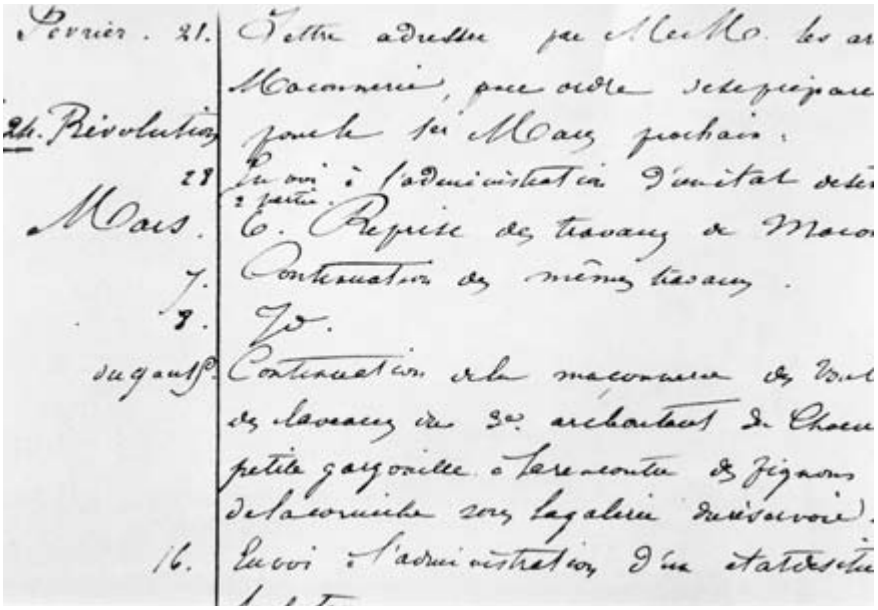
Just before the restoration of Notre-Dame installed a strange panoply of creatures high above Paris, a very different system of nature was being carved in stone for a monument facing the Jardin des plantes itself: the Fontaine Cuvier designed by Vigoureux in 1840 (fig. 149). Here the oval rather than ogive rules, and heads of various beasts are arranged around a circular cornice and below a beautiful human goddess representing nature, embodying Cuvier's ideas about the "mutual relation of forms in organized beings." The heads of the beasts are on the same level as man's in this totally rational and classically French ensemble, but, of course, man's head is installed dead center. Cuvier's system is anthropocentric, with no mingling of the human and the animal. This monument, like his monumental classification of the ani-

149. Vigoureux, Fontaine Cuvier, Paris, 1840. (Photo: James Austin.)

mal kingdom, published in 1817 as *Règne animal*, was also a theory of race, preferring a tripartite division of the human race into "the Caucasian, or white, the Mongolian, or yellow, and the Ethiopian, or Negro." He also saw "the beauty of the oval" as a characteristic trait of the human animal's highest form—the Caucasian—"the race from which we descend."[94]

By contrast, the glowering monsters of Notre-Dame with their strange, animal humanity, subvert the categories of Cuvier's analytic system, with its clear separation of living organisms into distinct genera, species, and races. One could argue that Viollet-le-Duc's own philosophy of history as a dialectic freed him from the overdetermined regimes not only of religion, but also of Enlightenment natural philosophy. For their forms have to be understood in the wider context of social anxiety about change and modernity—urban immigration and demographic chaos struck Paris in this period even without the revolution of 1848. Just because Viollet-le-Duc argued that such sculptures are expressions of nature and have no deep symbolic content does not mean we have to see them as innocent decoration. Morel in his *Traité des dégénérescences* described how "beside this civilized society, there are [other varieties] . . . which possess neither intelligence, responsibility, nor moral sentiment . . . whose

spirit finds no enlightenment nor consolation in religion. Some of these varieties have been rightly designated the *dangerous classes*."[95] As we shall explore in the next chapter, the nineteenth-century culture of monstrosity in which Viollet-le-Duc created his chimeras conceived of the dangerous other, the envious gaze, not only as fictive creatures of myth, or as prehistoric, extinct creatures of a lost world, but as the ever-present, volatile, and even sometimes terrifying members of this one.



150. The word "Revolution" written in the margin of the *Journal des travaux*, 24 February 1848. Archives MAP 80/14/10. (Photo: author.)

5. Monsters of Revolution

THE GARGOYLES OF POLITICS

These are the invasions of barbarians from within; the war will not be over until civilization has repulsed the last of these monsters.

VIOLLET-LE-DUC, *Lettres inédits* (1848)[1]

One of the many modern myths about the chimeras of Notre-Dame is that their stone stares have watched over many centuries of historical transformations, wars, and revolutions that have shaped the history of the capital. This chapter will show that these creatures did not stand as mere idle spectators of the political turmoil going on around them in the midcentury of their creation, but were themselves shaped by it. The fifty-four stone chimeras on the balustrade of Notre-Dame first came to life during the most violent and turbulent years of the century. Planned in the last four years of Louis-Philippe's July Monarchy (1830–48), they were begun during the Second Republic (February 1848–2 December 1852) and completed only in the early years of Napoléon III's Second Empire (1852–70). Is there any relationship between the rapidly changing political and social events of those years and the carving of the stones? Absolutely. Among accounts of finishing gargoyles and cutting stone courses sometimes interrupted by bad weather and carefully recorded in page after page of the *Journal des travaux*, the daybook of the restoration, is a chilling entry, the only word to fill the inner margins, quickly scribbled in under 24 February 1848—"Revolution" (fig. 150).

The uprising of February 1848 lasted three days and was an alliance of lower bourgeoisie and workers. The result was that a monarchy was replaced by a republic and significant goals were achieved, such as universal suffrage. But early idealism turned sour. Four months later the barricades were up in the working-class streets in eastern Paris as fifty thousand men and women were up in arms against the new government. It was impossible to live in Paris at this time and not be in the thick of violent and dangerous events. This was certainly true for Viollet-le-Duc, who wrote to his father on 30 June, after a week that had seen the worst fighting on the streets of Paris between the National Guard and the insurgents. He described the barricades, the desolation of the streets. "The plan of attack of these savages was

151. Viollet-le-Duc, screaming gargoyle for the north tower. Graphite and wash drawing on beige paper dated August 1848 pasted together with another gargoyle signed "Grand gargouille de la tour du Sud Juillet 1848." Private collection.

152. Viollet-le-Duc, snarling, horrified beast. Graphite drawing dated 1848. Private collection.

certainly conceived by men of undoubted merit, and, thanks to the incapacity, to the negligence and to the participation of the deposed government, they have been allowed to develop this plan completely; nothing was lacking from it except the invasion of the National Assembly. . . . We have fought for four days without pity or mercy against veritable wild beasts [*véritables bêtes sauvages*] whose only response to every question is to shoot guns. . . . They are nothing but a band of looters. . . . These are the invasions of barbarians from within; the war will not be over until civilization has repulsed the last of these monsters or until they have massacred the last civilized man. One does not know the number of dead on our side, but they have already killed many, between five and ten thousand."[2] In the last days of July, it was still dangerous to go out on the streets. The architect continued to work feverishly on a series of drawings for the gargoyles of the west facade of Notre-Dame, creating some of the most vicious, snarling gargoyles, which combine the wide-open jaws of "wild beasts" with terrifying human expressions of shock and rage (fig. 151). Others look down in horror, their wide eyes full of fear and vulnerability (fig. 152). These designs, it must be emphasized, are nothing like thirteenth-century gargoyles, which as animal forms may snarl and spit but do not register anything like this kind of psychological surprise. Viollet-le-Duc gave his monsters' eyes pupils, making them capable of gazing and responding. These drawings have more in common with Charles Le Brun's eighteenth-century studies of the human expression and emotion than anything in medieval architecture. They are in this sense passionate gargoyles, responding to what goes on around them. These were also the weeks in July and August when the

architect was imagining on paper the first of the human chimeras, such as the gloating goat-demon, whose expression of triumph mingled with bloodthirsty fascination takes on new meaning in this context (no. 17). In a letter to his friend from the relative safety of Nantes, where he was busy restoring another cathedral, Lassus described "our astonishing revolution" (notre étonnante révolution).[3] The stones they both designed during this year of promise and fear also seem to cry out with fear as well as astonishment.

What were Viollet-le-Duc's feelings toward the 1848 revolution? We should not be too hasty to judge him as a reactionary. Baudelaire had much the same feelings about the June days, calling it "madness of the people and madness of the bourgeoisie."[4] The days of idealism were over. In contrast to Eugène Delacroix's *Liberty Leading the People* (1831), Ernest Messonier's painting *The Barricades, rue de la Mortellerie, June 1848* (1848) depicts a pile of corpses lying in the dark street. Viollet-le-Duc had only been seventeen years old in 1831 when he had sketched, from the safe distance of the Left Bank, the angry mob sacking the archiepiscopal palace on the south side of the cathedral.[5] Eighteen years later, as a government functionary in charge of a major politically sensitive restoration project, he was building a new sacristy on this very spot and he was in a much more precarious position. There may have been personal reasons for his lack of enthusiasm for the new republic. Viollet-le-Duc's father lost his post as conservateur des residences royales aux Tuilleries in 1848, and no pension was granted him by the new government, despite his forty-seven years of administrative service.[6] On a wider level the experience of this traumatic year was one of disappointment—a sense of uncanny repetition, replaying the revolution, in Marx's famous phrase, "as farce." People of all political persuasions were forced to become conscious of the process and the problem of representation itself—of how in modernity things come to be perceived. After the brutal repression that followed the experiment of 1848 the dream of fraternity between classes was shattered, and what Marx called "class struggle" became in Richard Terdiman's words "a perceptual structure."[7] This struggle was visible even in the series of pseudo-Gothic gargoyles and chimeras carved on the facade of the country's most famous church.

1 · *Political Animals on the Left and Right*

What is perhaps most remarkable about the chimeras on the balustrade is that more than half of them are not monsters at all but ordinary creatures imbued with a kind of human physiognomic intensity. As well as numerous birds, such as eagles, there are a bristly boar, an elephant, and a bear, adding up to a bestiary comedy that has more in common with the work of Grandville, such as his illustrations for *Scenes de la vie*

153. J.-J. Grandville, "Parliament of the Animals." From *Scènes de la vie privée et publique des Animaux* (Paris: J. Hetzel, 1842).

privée et publique des animaux, written by Pierre-Jules Hetzel and published in 1842. This was an illustrated collection of stories around the framework of a revolt of the animals in the Jardin des plantes, the Paris zoo. The revolutionaries elect Grandville as an honorary animal if he will illustrate the history of their republic, and each animal tells a tale. One of the earliest illustrations in the volume shows the animals in their positions right and left of center in a bestial repetition of what Grandville saw as current political squabbles under the July Monarchy (fig. 153). At the left are the fierce wild beasts like the wolf, rhinoceros, bear, and boar, and even a militant wasp, all clamoring for war in the defense of "animalité nationale." On the right are more docile creatures: rabbits, sleepy sheep, goats, donkeys, pigs, and giraffes. These are the "civilized animals" who demand the "status quo."[8]

Nothing quite so programmatic guided the placement of animals under the left, or north, and right, or south, towers of Notre-Dame. But Grandville's wonderful image may help us see some of the ways in which the beasts of the balustrade served to represent political and social extremes, contemporary society rather than the Christological symbolism of the medieval bestiary. Certainly the wild beasts of the left are all present, such as the wild boar (no. 47; fig. 154), the elephant (no. 41), and the bear (no. 43; fig. 155). Apart from the ram, whose herbivorous nature makes him

154. Boar (no. 47), Notre-Dame, Paris. Late nineteenth-century photograph. MAP CNMHS.

155. Bear, basilisk, and cormorant (nos. 43–45), Notre-Dame, Paris. Late nineteenth-century photograph. MAP CNMHS.

more right than left in Grandville's zoological parliament but whose horns make him one of the more demonic forces on the revamped Gothic cathedral, all the beasts on the balustrade are "left-wing" animals associated with the dangers of socialism and revolution.

The status of animals was changing profoundly at this time, partly as a result of changing scientific theory. A fundamental difference between these animals and those carved on buildings during the Middle Ages is that, in the earlier time, animals were classed separately from man, which meant that they could be used as symbols of human vices. But by the middle of the nineteenth century, the line between human and animal was less distinct. Animals became forces of the uncanny. Stefan Germer's powerful analysis of how this worked in Géricault's painting could just as well describe the chimeras of the cathedral: "The uncanniness results from the combination of their massive bodies' untameable strength with their reflectively conscious gaze; it broke through the old centaur logic, which would attribute rationality to humans, and the instincts, in contrast, to animals. What frightens one in Gericualt's horses is not their instinctual being but rather the suspicion that they possess a consciousness similar (if not superior) to that of humans so that they will elude control—not out of dumbly stubborn obstinacy but rather out of calculation. . . . The animal represented as unmasterable gains through this representation in alienness and men-

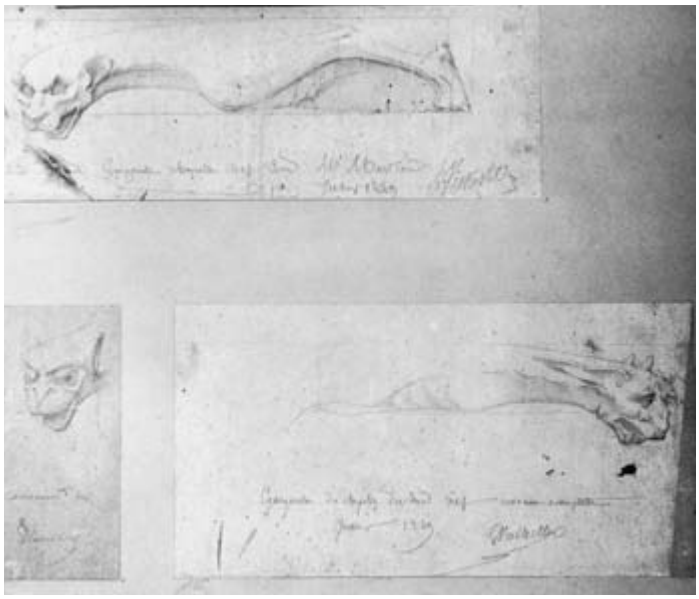
156. The bear pit at the Jardin des plantes. From Pierre Bernard et al., *Le Jardin des plantes*, 1842. (Photo: author.)

ace, which the disempowered viewer comprehends, not merely as part of the motif, but rather as experience undergone in the moment of viewing."[9] This instantaneity is crucial to the uncanny effect of the whole balustrade—the feeling that these creatures are dangerously cognizant. They seem to be watching us. Viollet-le-Duc by placing animals high up on the balustrade of the cathedral effected a brilliant reversal of the social and spatial dynamics of the Jardin des plantes, where many of the animals, most famously the bears, were in a sunken pit to be gazed down upon by the crowd (fig. 156). At Notre-Dame the bear gazed down upon the caged humans of the city below. It is as though Parisians were the animals, the zoological spectacle enjoyed by these demonically powerful beasts.

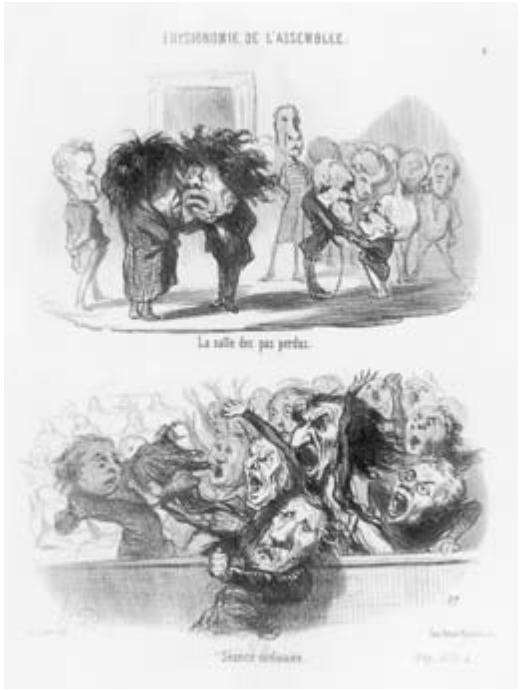
There are strange effects of scale in certain of the animal chimeras, who, because they are all of nearly identical size, seem either too large or too small. While the birds become gargantuan, the elephant is miniaturized (fig. 157). When the facade of Notre-Dame was first under constructionin about 1200, no one in Europe had ever seen an elephant. When Viollet-le-Duc designed his petite pachyderm, who was on the inner south face of the north tower and thus very visible to visitors going up to the balustrade, this animal would surely have reminded visitors of another Parisian elephant. This was Napoléon Bonaparte's plaster-and-wooden monument that had stood in the southwest corner of the place de la Bastille for decades. The hollow beast was later remembered by Victor Hugo in *Les Miserables* as "a sort of symbol of the popular will. It was gloomy, enigmatic and huge."[10] The postrevolutionary symbol soon became infested with rats and had to be destroyed. Viollet-le-Duc's petite pachyderm seems just as ridiculous.

There is an important connection here between the greatest political caricaturist

157. Elephant and leopard (nos. 41 and 42), Notre-Dame, Paris. Late nineteenth-century photograph. MAP CNMHS.



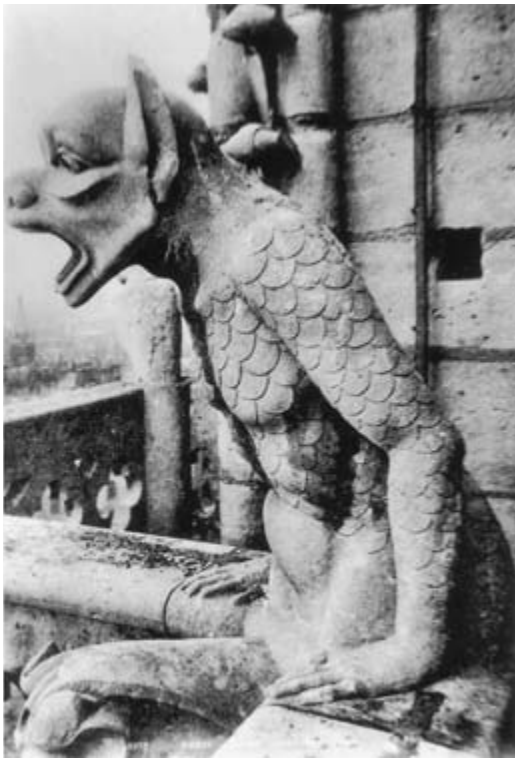
158. Viollet-le-Duc, three drawings for gargoyles, 1849. CNMHS.



159. Honoré Daumier, *Physionomie de l'Assemblée*, 1849.

of the century, Honoré Daumier (1808–79), and the chimeras of the cathedral. The medievalist and scholar of French prints Jean Adhèmar hinted many years ago that some of the chimeras "have more in common with Daumier than with the art of the thirteenth century."[11] Baudelaire praised this artist in 1846 as being as exact an artist as Lavater: "Leaf through his work, and you will see parading before your eyes in all its gripping and fantastic reality everything that a great city contains in living monstrosities."[12] Daumier was also close to Geoffroy-Dechaume and other sculptors working on the restoration, especially during these politically turbulent years of the midcentury. His four thousand rapidly drawn images on lithographic stones published daily in *Le Charivari* had a profound influence on the stones that his friends carved for the cathedral. He was a sculptor himself, and the boldly modeled and faceted forms of his caricatured heads of politicians, both in clay and bronze, have an affinity with the way Pyanet carved the great masses of the chimeras. Some of the most remarkable of the drawings that Viollet-le-Duc created for gargoyles in 1849 (fig. 158) also seem to have particular physiognomies, their sad, sagging jowls making them look not unlike the corrupt politicians satirized by Daumier (fig. 159).

The political meaning of some of the animal types is not surprising since the pre-



160. Howling scaly demon (no. 30), Notre-Dame, Paris. From an old postcard. (Photo: author.)

eminent site of animal display in Paris, the Jardin des plantes, was often compared to the Chambre des deputés. The roaring, open-mouthed monstrosity of many of the chimeras echoes Daumier's representations of the political arena itself. His superb series of lithographs satirizing the new government, the *Physionomie de l'Assemblée* of 1849, depicts ministers like Adolphe Thiers and Louis-Mathieu Molé roaring and gesticulating like wild beasts (fig. 159).[13] From the mouths of so many of the chimeras of Notre-Dame also issue those "screams in all eternity" that the German writer Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, in his *Laocoon*, sought to have banished from the "visual arts as an unbeautiful fixation upon one particular moment."[14] But for political artists like Daumier and Viollet-le-Duc, this cry that cannot be heard is useful precisely *because* it represents a particular moment in time. It is that split second of deathlike choking of what cannot be uttered, rending a hole in the real and resonating with silent horror. It is the open mouth of outrage (fig. 160).[15] After the unforgetful unleashing of demons seventy years earlier no monster, especially a gaping gargoyle, could ever be just medieval for a Parisian spectator. Always there lurked behind the screaming mouth and the leering eyes the fear of the return of the Terror. Remarkably, Daumier

was able to keep up his satiric attack on Louis-Napoléon even after the latter seized power and declared himself emperor in 1852. Despite the imposition of rigorous press censorship he used the racist stereotype of the black emperor Soulouque in order to attack Louis-Napoléon personally.[16] Daumier managed this partly because he was working in an ephemeral medium of prints produced for daily publication. By contrast, Viollet-le-Duc was creating a *Charivari* in stone for eternity and not sketched on the lithographic stone for the next issue.

II · *The Brute and the Bourgeois*

Another political caricaturist whose work helps us understand the chimeras of Notre-Dame was Grandville. His chapters entitled "Une Après-Midi au Jardin des plantes" in his book *Une Autre Monde* of 1844 includes a scene which satirizes the new fashion for monstrous spectacle in this period with a bourgeois family's visit to the zoo (fig. 161).[17] A fish-woman, her bird-tailed husband, and their monster-child and bird-pet stare up in awe at turtle-birds and other composite hybrids on their perches. Strangely, a number of the most disturbing chimeras are gawking, perfect embodiments of gaping wonder (fig. 160). The neoclassical sculptor Antoine Étex criticized the chimeras in an 1855 review for creating the impression that "we are in the middle of the Jardin des plantes!"[18] He also described "la monstreuse Exposition Universelle de 1855" as though it were a freak show.[19] Philippe Hamon, writing about Paris exhibitions, describes the mode of viewing exemplified by some of the chimeras and typical of the crowds attending the 1855 Exposition Universelle: "Exhibitionism, the exhibition of objects or subjects, the overexposure of the world or its *overexhibition*—all carry a sort of *inhibition*, a stupefied vision that blocks the normal functions of memory, imagination, or even speech: a wide-eyed stare usually goes hand in hand with dumbfoundedness, or at least with a cliché, which is a form of nonspeech."[20] Five million people paid to go to this first French Universal Exposition in the Palais de l'Industrie on the Champs-Elysées, which was conceived as a great collective enterprise bringing together the people of all classes by Napoléon III. If the myth of the great Gothic cathedrals was that they were symbolic centers of social unity, the exposition had taken over that role. In 1845 Balzac wrote in *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes* of the *rentier*, the indolent bourgeois of independent means who wanders the city stupefied by its sights with "shallow joy": "The rentier exists through his eyes. . . . The giraffe, the new museum acquisitions, painting exhibitions, and the products of industry—everything is a feast for the eyes, and equally amazing."[21] Hamon contrasts the flaneur whose eyes are likewise bulging (as in the fantastic drawings of Grandville) but who remains an active interpreter of the city with the

161. J.-J. Grandville, "Le Perchoir." From *Un Autre Monde*, 1844. (Photo: author.)

gawker who "is at once the origin and the consumer of a world of pure exhibition." The "most avid and most blasé sensory organ" is "the Parisian's eye," according to Balzac. Hamon also notes that the gawking bourgeois rentier is constantly watching works in progress. "When turned away from the shop window, [he] has the obsessive habit of training [his eyes] on public works projects, particularly on the construction of new monuments. . . . The new edifice under construction is the ideal development, the ideal progressive exposition of an architect's project that is concretized little by little under the vacant stares of the gawking onlookers."[22] Viollet-le-Duc alluded to this himself when he described how uniformity and civic improvements of the nineteenth century were destroying the traditional relationship between people and their buildings: "No municipality then [in the thirteenth century] would have dreamed of imposing on every proprietor on the same street a . . . uniform style of architecture; and in that century, which some point to as a time of oppression, the idea of molding the habitations of thousands of citizens on the same type would have never come to any authority. Each person then was too conscious of his individuality, of his personal responsibility, to suppose that men could be penned like animals in a zoological

162. Charles-Joseph Traviès, "Miroir Grotesque," showing two bourgeois cows. BNF.

163. L.L., two beasts fighting (no. 51), Notre-Dame, Paris. (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

164. Bull (no. 49), Notre-Dame, Paris. MAP CNMHS.

garden in identical barracks to amuse the eyes of idle passersby."[23] Those who stared in awe at Notre-Dame's re-creation in these years saw themselves mirrored in the chimeras' vapid stares.

Viollet-le-Duc was just as responsive as the Parisian caricaturists working at mid-century who made the beast a mirror of the bourgeois. In a print by Traviès entitled "Miroir Grotesque (Excès de tendresse)" two clothed cow-lovers seated on a chaise longue seem to crush one another (fig. 162).[24] This print reminds one of the only group composition among the chimeras (no. 51), one of which is a bull (fig. 163). The single bull chimera looks more conservative, like one of Daumier's flabby functionaries (no. 49; fig. 164). This notion of seeing animals in human terms, divided into those which are wild and those which are "domesticated," was especially popularized in Alphonse Toussenel's 1847 book *L'Esprit des bêtes: Zoologie passionelle*. According to its author, the bear is seen as the "the living incarnation of hostility toward progress,"[25] and it appears in a section called "Stinking Beasts" (Les Bêtes puantes). "Le bouc," or goat, "has never enjoyed a good reputation" because of its dissolute habits, and "the odor which it exudes does not symbolize a model of purity."[26] Discussing "le sanglier," he describes how "the Jewish nation and the Arab nation are, like pigs, eminently subject to leprosy. Pig leprosy is called ladrerie. Ladrarie, avarice!"[27] Toussenel also wrote a straightforwardly anti-Semitic tract called *Les Juifs, rois de*

165. Cat (no. 29). (Photo: Alinari AC.)

l'époque published in 1845. It is an emblem of "sensualisme brutale."[28] Toussenel's anthropocentrism is as surreal as Grandville's but far more dangerous.

Some of the beasts on the balustrade are felines that roamed the rooftops of Paris as well as the jungle. Viollet-le-Duc was fond of cats and made beautiful drawings of his pets. But even the seemingly innocent sketches for a planned children's book intended for Grandville's publisher Hetzel, *Hostilities of a Cat against the Toy Soldiers*

suggests a more disturbing feline.[29] His sharp-toothed cat chimera (fig. 165) played into male fears about female mystery, power, and danger that had been associated with the animal for centuries. Its nocturnal independence, its urban wandering, and its symbolic use in Baudelaire's poetry and in famous paintings like Manet's *Olympia* had made it also more a sign of predatory prostitution.[30] As Kathleen Kete has argued in her book on pet keeping in nineteenth-century Paris, the relationship between Parisians and their pets was complex and fraught with symbolic associations.[31] When it comes to those species "ralliées à l'homme," the dog wins out over the always-feared feline. On the balustrade there are cats but no dogs, whose qualities lent themselves to embourgeoisement. According to Toussenel "the cat seemed resolutely set against incorporation into bourgeois life." Like the intellectual, the cat represented those values forced to the margins: "Civilization may no more dispense with the cat than with prostitution . . . this horrible vampire that it feeds with its flesh and blood."[32] This association of certain of the chimeras with the feared feminine will increase as the century comes to its close, as we shall explore in a later chapter. When the chimeras were first being fashioned, however, the charge of the ferocious jaws and snarling teeth exhibited by many of the beasts would have given the ledge overlooking the parvis the air not of a bourgeois space but of a barrier set up against them, not a balcony but another charged liminal structure of the nineteenth century—a barricade.

III · *The Wild Beast and the Revolutionary Worker*

One of the earliest chimeras, created in 1848–49 for the western facade, is known as "le Rongeur"—the biter, or devourer, in zoological terminology, a rodent. It twists its dog-lion head as it gnaws at an animal carcass, its enormous teeth ripping into the stretched flesh (no. 14; fig. 166). However, more disturbing than the beast's violent jaws are its hairy human belly and large-knuckled fingers. Louis Chevalier touches upon this metaphor as he describes the dangerous classes of Paris as "savage . . . [defined] above all for the brutality and the cult of strength that distinguished it from the rest of the population; it claimed brutality for itself as, so to speak, its own particular mode of expression."[33] Ironically, animals, especially wild ones, were increasingly regulated in nineteenth-century cities like London and Paris as the bourgeois population became more and more terrified of violence in the streets. As Maurice Agulhon and Alain Corbin have described in their studies of blood in the Parisian imaginary, after 1833 public animal fights, like that depicted in one pair of chimeras on the cathedral (fig. 163) were prohibited.[34] The Grammont Law of 1850 prohibited the public abuse of animals, which meant that even slaughtering went on in the secret space of the abattoir because, the authorities now believed, "the spectacle of

166. Devouring beast and cat-panther (nos. 14 and 15), ca. 1900.

suffering encourages cruelty." It was necessary to leash the mob, this underclass so easily excited by the sight of blood. For Auguste Romieu, writing of the "red terror," the "popular multitude is a terrible monster, furious, inconstant, light, flighty, and lazy."[35]

Ferocious monsters devouring their prey had long been the staple of political caricature. In 1790 a political animal, a quadruped with three heads, one with a mitre, one with a military hat, and the other with an abbot's bonnet, representing the three estates of the aristocracy, was depicted in a print feasting upon the corpse of the people. Two years later the tables were turned and a print appeared in which the revolutionary monster eats the symbols of church and royalty. As Régis Michel has argued, "the chimera metaphor is politically reversible or polymorphous."[36] These two chimeras descend from one of the most horrifically beautiful of eighteenth-century monsters: *La Chimère de Monsieur Desprez* (1771).[37] This engraving predates the Revolution and represents an Enlightenment artist's fear of fantasy, the monster of illusion that eats up body and soul (fig. 167). Louis-Jean Desprez's superb creature of negation also clearly reveals gender and class anxieties with its three dangling teats and the fact that its male victim thrusts back his head in the ecstasy of the orgasmic "little death."

167. Louis -Jean Desprez, *La Chimère de Monsieur Desprez*. Engraving, fourth state, 1771, BNF.

168. A. Ferdinandus, "The *Loup*, compagnon du devoir." From Eugène Sue, *Le Juif errant*, 1883–84.

The human victim is shown being incorporated within the opened-up interior of the monster's belly, as though introjected into one of the skeletal displays in the Museum of Natural History. In contrast to the chimera of Monsieur Desprez, Viollet-le-Duc's "Rongeur" is far less perverse. Only the glint of pleasure of its upturned, delirious eyes, as it feeds off flesh, links it to its great chimerical predecessor. Here is a beast with the bare, brawny arms of a workman. The slobbering lips and gnashing teeth cracking into chicken legs are not so much those of a fantastic chimera as those of a mason on his lunch break in the construction yard below.

The milieu of the migrant masons who lodged in the deteriorated center of the city was an especially violent one, and the men from the Limousin and other provinces who came to work as laborers in Paris were often seen as little more than animals.[38] An illustration of one of these workers by A. Ferdinandus for the edition of Eugène Sue's *Le Juif errant* published by J. Rouff (1883–84) is titled "The *Loup*, compagnon du devoir" (fig. 168). The actual nickname for stonecutters was *loups-garoux* (werewolves). Others were known as *devorants* (devourers) and *chiens* (dogs). The perceived brutishness of this class was thus associated with the cathedral itself and certain of its beasts, like the fanged creature who leers from the back of the south

169. Fanged reptilian beast (no. 36). MAP CNMHS. (Photo: Jannie Mayer.)

170. Cerberus (no. 48). (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

171. Cham [Amédée-Charles-Henri, comte de Noé], "La Corde tendue de la situation." From *Le Charivari*, 23 October 1849.

tower (no. 36; fig. 169).[39] Among the chimeras, many of the human-animal hybrids that are definitely male have the muscular bodies associated with dangerous classes of workers. The brutish torso of the lion-man, for example, and the gross pectorals of "le Rongeur" reveal the rippling, muscular physiques associated in the nineteenth century not with the leisure of the bodybuilder but the toil and labor of the house-builder. Balzac wrote of a proletarian awaiting his turn in Judge Popinot's anteroom in the rue de Fouarre. "His chest, half bare, displaying swelling muscles, the index of a temperament of brass which had helped him bear his vast epic of misfortunes."[40] It is significant that the melancholy demon too has strong, defined biceps, manly arms that have done more than hold up his chin.

Although Viollet-Le-Duc wrote to his father of the street violence erupting in the city in 1848, many of his "wild beast" drawings date from considerably later. A chimera depicted in a drawing of 1854 with clear revolutionary associations is the three-headed dog Cerberus (no. 48; fig. 170). In addition to being the mythical guardian of Hades, this monster had already been associated with the threat of revolution and socialism in caricatures published in journals like *Charivari* (fig. 171). The multiplication of its heads symbolized the dangers of democracy, of not having a single "head," that is, a king or emperor, to lead the body politic. Unlike the three-headed chimera of Monsieur Desprez, however, which is linked to the tradition of multicephalic political caricatures, the three-headed demon-dog of democracy here does not bite, but merely stands guard, perhaps articulating some of Viollet-le-Duc's own ambivalence when it came to progressive versus reactionary political positions in these troubled years.

The night birds and owls were also part of the gloomy social physiognomy of Paris (fig. 172). A grim old woman with a beak-like, hooked nose who drags along the angelic little match seller in one of Charles-Joseph Traviès's illustrations to Eugène Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* is called "la Chouette"—the owl (fig. 173). She is among the characters described in the novel whose humanity has been so degraded by poverty and sickness that they assume the characteristics of wild animals and who give us another social dimension for reading the creatures of the balustrade in human terms. These hybrid dregs of society eke out their existence right below the towers of Notre-Dame in what were, until they were later cleared by Haussmann, the worst slums of the city.[41]

Another writer who connected monstrosity and revolution was even closer to the milieu of the restoration of the cathedral and had earlier written against it. This was Jean-Philippe Schmit, the lithographer, republican reactionary Gothic revivalist, and founding member of the Comité des arts et monuments, established in 1840. In 1851, under the pseudonym Jonathan, he published a vision of the decline of society since

172. "La Chouette" (the barn owl) (no. 34). MAP CNMHS.

173. Charles-Joseph Traviès, "La Chouette." From Eugène Sue, *Les Mystères de Paris*, 1844.

the death of Louis XVI entitled *L'Abîme, 1793–1852*. The abyss of the title is the hell of half a century of French history, where the damned are forced to vacillate between the rule of *Monarchia* and *Anarchia*. Here he sees savage crowds swarming, their mouths hurling insults and blasphemies, transformed into jackals and lynxes. He recognizes that "these hideous figures bear some resemblance to man" (offrant quelque vague ressemblance avec l'homme) but, growling and clawing like wild animals, most lack human hearts. In a great "festival in the empire of the abyss" (fête dans l'empire de l'Abîme) demons like "le Maître" and "la Famine," who preside over the scene, howl joyfully over the torture and destruction. Sophists are turned into giant scorpions, and "the artisans of revolutions" (les artisans de révolutions) are tortured by being transformed into monsters, hydras, and harpies, their brains constantly giving birth to revolutionary ideas in the form of rats that devour their creators. He is finally taken to a plain where there is only stone rubble of cities destroyed by war and greed.[42] Nothing written in the midcentury comes closer in certain details—howling mouths, bestial transformations, and demons looking down—and in overall mood to the chimeras of the balustrade of the cathedral than Schmit's horrifying allegory.

For most Parisian spectators there always lurked behind the gargoyle's mouth a fear of the return to the Terror. This anxiety led the authorities restoring some of the French cathedrals to decide that screaming animals and gargoyles might be too dangerous to include. Did these not arouse the populace to commit violent acts? The most extreme example of this avoidance can be seen at Moulins, where chimeras take the forms of pastoral personages in the powdered wigs and costumes of eighteenth-century musicians and elegant ladies who look down benignly from the newly restored cathedral, visible in a photograph by Charles Marville in 1860 (fig. 174). These nostalgic prerevolutionary human actors of an idealized ancien régime are the very antithesis of the potentially revolutionary chimeras of Notre-Dame.

Some of the chimeras in their bloated and agonized twistings suggest the horror not of violence but of the disease that came with poverty, especially those whose scaly skins and stone sores were intentional and not the result of pollution. The lumpy flesh of the fanged creature (no. 36), its crest seeming more like an eruption, evokes the horrors of diseases which festered on the Île-de-la-Cité and which were treated directly below in the hospital, or Hôtel-Dieu (fig. 175). The disease that swept right up to the cathedral and even killed some of its masons as they worked at restoring it was cholera. In 1848, 19,000 died, and in 1854 and 1855 cholera filled the hospitals, with 9,217 dead. A lurid description of death huddled up next to the sacred edifice appeared in Sue's *The Wandering Jew* (1845). "Of all the quarters of Paris, that which, during the period of the increase of the cholera, offered what was, perhaps, the most fearful spectacle, was the Quartier de la Cité; and in the Cité, the parvis of Notre-Dame was almost every day the theater of terrible scenes, as the majority of

174. Charles Marville, human figures on the balustrade of the new nave of Notre-Dame de Moulins, ca. 1860.

175. Fanged reptilian beast from behind (no. 36). (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

the sick from the neighboring streets, whom they were conveying to the Hôtel-Dieu, were brought to this spot. The cholera had not one physiognomy—it had a thousand. Thus . . . several events in which the horrible mingled with the strange took place in front of Notre-Dame."[43] Sue goes on to describe the cholera masquerade in which artists, students, and young men of fashion brought their ladyloves and amid the groans of the dying had dinner in the square of Notre-Dame with the intention of "bullying the cholera" (narguer le choléra).[44] "The sun was beginning to set and threw his golden beams on the black sculpture of the portal of Notre-Dame and the imposing mass of its two towers."[45] It is interesting that Sue was writing when the cathedral was itself in a sick, blackened state, before Viollet-le-Duc nursed it back to health.

An illustration in Toussenel's *L'Esprit des bêtes* shows cholera as a bat-winged female demon flying above the city carrying her victims, with the two towers of Notre-Dame below (fig. 176). Although scientists were just beginning to understand the microscopic appearance of the organisms that carried diseases like cholera, such a scourge at this date was still personified as coming from on high, an angelic or demonic plague that carried its victims off with it rather than something coming from within. Grandville also feminized the disease, giving a vaginal devouring mouth and breastlike eyes to his illustration of the Volvoce, which, "like the cholera of 1833,

176. Emile Bayard, cholera taking more victims from Paris. From Alphonse Toussenel, *L'Esprit des bêtes*, 1847. (Photo: author.)

177. Cham, "Les Misérables saisis le vertige, la plume de Victor Hugo les ayant élevés à la hauteur de Notre-Dame-de-Paris" (Seized by the wretched vertigo, Victor Hugo's pen having elevated them to the heights of Notre-Dame), April 1862. Lithograph. BNF.

passed by feeding on people."[46]

Another popular image that reverberates with the aerial fantasy of the chimeras gazing down on Paris from above is a lithograph by Cham published in *Charivari* (fig. 177). It is a satire on Victor Hugo's heroicization of the lower classes in his 1845 novel *Les Misérables* and shows poor people being carried aloft by a supernatural force—not this time by death, but by art. It is captioned "The wretched seized by vertigo—the pen of Victor Hugo having elevated them to the height of Notre-Dame de Paris" (Les Misérables saisis le vertige, la plume de Victor Hugo les ayant élevés à la hauteur de Notre-Dame-de-Paris). An inky and dirty mass of undesirables is literally lifted into the height of the towers (that is, to the status of his previous successful novel, *Notre-Dame de Paris*) at the tip of the author's quill. Viollet-le-Duc had already raised the dangerous classes to the dizzying heights of the balustrade in the form of chimeras.

The culture of spectacle in which the newly restored Notre-Dame had to position itself was one with a host of new sights and sites competing for the crowd's attention.

When the church was first built, it stood as the largest and most spectacular building in the city, a focus of communal aspiration and desire. But in 1850 there were new sacred sites of spectacle—the department store, the theater, the café, and the art exhibition—all of which in different ways replaced the gaze of transcendence for a bourgeois public that yearned for scopic stimulation. Arguing for the retention of Gothic as the style for churches in the face of those in the Académie des beaux-arts who wanted everything to be built in the classical style, the abbé Gueyton wrote in 1842 that it was fine to build "bourses, theaters, wharves in any style you please but for our old churches, let us conserve them and build them all the same."[47] This faith in Gothic on the part of a large portion of the clergy and both the liberals and reactionaries of the period presented a problem for Viollet-le-Duc, whose relationship to the church was always ambiguous. This ambiguity is visible, as we shall see, in some of the chimeras.

178. Shrouded bird (no. 10), 1950s. (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

IV · *Shrouded Birds and Murdered Bishops*

A ghoulish raven haunts the north tower adjacent to the melancholy demon—an enormous, bone-beaked bird with bulging, lizardy eyes and human shoulders beneath a shroudlike cloth (no. 10; fig. 178). Another on the south tower wears a hood with eyeholes cut out of it reminiscent of the costume of the Inquisition (no. 28). In this stone rookery of birds of ill omen there are crows and buzzards resting on the parapet in Viollet-le-Duc's fantasy of arrested flight, as well as the night owl, the *Strix bubo* of Linnaeus, who turns his head and rustles his wings (no. 27). Viollet-le-Duc in his *Dictionnaire* had described the gigantic birds of Reims, "bizarre birds, draped and cowled" (oiseaux bizarres, drapés, capuchonnés), as examples of medieval anticlerical imagery.[48] One of Daumier's anticlerical satires of these years, titled "Capucinade," targeted the liberal Catholic champion of the Notre-Dame restoration, Montalembert, who had written histories praising the ideals of the medieval monastic life (fig. 179). In a clearly anticlerical gargoyle that he designed for the new sacristy Viollet-le-Duc gave the same shrouded, elongated form to a human monk, which he then applied to the birds (fig. 180). This suggests that some of the chimeras are the monsters that emerge out of religious belief itself rather than demons gathering in opposition to it.[49]

179. Honoré Daumier, "Capucinade: Contented Poverty." Lithograph, 1851.

The tradition of seeing the clergy as crows and vultures, draped in black, was a commonplace in nineteenth-century anticlerical propaganda. The illustrations in Toussenel's influential *L'Esprit des bêtes* make use of the old parallels between certain vices and certain animals in a series of contrasting facing images. Opposite the illustration labeled "The weasel is without pity" (La fouine est sans pitié), showing

180. Viollet-le-Duc, hooded monk gargoyle on the corner of the new sacristy. (Photo: Stuart Michaels.)

a weasel devouring chickens, is a clerical monster, "Dom Basile," whose long, back-turned figure preys ominously on the demure young girl after the sermon outside a church portal (fig. 181). In this image the priest is associated with the carnivorous creature but also has the stealthy appearance of a bird of prey and the elongated form of a gargoyle. The church was also linked by progressives to the most extreme forms of sexual perversion. Had not the vampire of Montparnasse, Bertrand, been raised in a seminary, which, as one of the experts at the time, Dr. Lunier, observed, "developed in him a bizarre excitability of the genital organs, as is quite common in religious instititions"? He went on to add that priests or ex-seminarians were responsible for the majority of known cases of "cohabitation with the dead" (the term "necrophilia" having not yet been invented).[50]

During the years that Notre-Dame was a laboratory of modern restoration, it was also the focus of a religious crisis involving intense conflict about the role of the church in French national life. On the one hand it was the "foyer" of the Catholic revival, usually described as Ultramontane, centering on those Catholics who owed allegiance to the pope across the Alps. Every year from 1843 till 1851 the Advent sermons of the charismatic Dominican preacher Jean-Baptiste-Henri Lacordaire drew thousands of faithful and delivered the message that a return to the Middle Ages was happening well beyond the activity of statue making. Yet in these very same years Notre-Dame was controlled by a group of Parisian clerics who were solid Gallicans and who defended their national church and its national traditions. This explains why for an Ultramontane reactionary journalist like Louis Veuillot, who had been a convert to Rome and who created the highly influential newspaper *L'Univers,* Notre-Dame was the church of the devil. To him, it represented the pride and perversity of the Second Empire; it belonged in the same class as other signs of rampant modernity: the rage for scientific progress, the universities, the growth of the Paris stock exchange, the licentious theaters, the waltz![51] Moreover, Notre-Dame was being restored by liberal scientific architects who wanted to return it to pure French Gothic—a virtual manifesto for the nationalism of the French church.

181. Emile Bayard, "Dom Basile," the predatory prelate from Alphonse Toussenel's *L'Esprit des bêtes*, 1847.

It seems odd to think that Viollet-le-Duc, the man entrusted with the restoration of the most symbolically important church in the nation, is usually described as being anticlerical in his politics. His association of religion with darkness and ignorance as opposed to rationalism and science is of course a product of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, but it also needs to be placed in the context of the crisis faced by the church in these years of revolution and change. Although churchmen had at first welcomed the new republic in 1848, they had soon retreated to a more conservative position.[52] In the first six months after the coup d'état of December 1851 the new emperor augmented the *budget des cultes*, especially in funds for church building. Even more

important was the Falloux Law, passed a year earlier, which gave the clergy greater control of education in an effort to curb the threat of socialism. But these gains could not hide the deeper rifts within the French Catholic Church, threatened by papal censorship from outside and the propapal Ultramontanes from within. Structurally it was in decay, too, with churches crumbling in disrepair, priests poorly paid, and 60 percent of seminarians coming from peasant backgrounds. This helps explain the interest of the symbolist group of the archaeologists, especially Didron, in myth of the cathedral as a "bible of the poor," in their nostalgia for an age when the truths of a universal Catholic Church were well-enough known to be readable in stone.

What was Viollet-le-Duc's attitude to the church? The anticlericalism of his uncle Étienne-Jean Delécluze was certainly part of his heritage. Many have seen in the "oiseaux capuchonnés" something close to Daumier's brilliant and biting anticlerical satires of greedy prelates, poised like birds of prey over their gargantuan suppers (fig. 179).[53] Viollet-le-Duc's close friend was Prosper Mérimée, the inspector general of historic monuments, who had spent his life battling ignorant and corrupt local clergy. Mérimée's letters to Madame de Montijo, mother of the future Empress Eugénie, made scathing reference to the Catholic revival at Notre-Dame during the 1840s.

After France's humiliating defeat by the Prussians in 1870 and the siege of Paris, Viollet-le-Duc wrote of a country weakened by deadly tendencies of the French spirit to believe in "chance, the stars, Providence, the Holy Virgin and the Sacred Heart."[54] He had been less polemical about religion earlier in his career and had made his point against the symbolists by simply refusing to create a programmatic meaning for each gargoyle or chimera on Notre-Dame. For example, among the chimeras there are birds whose meaning is wholly positive within the Christian bestiary tradition—such as the pelican (no. 35), whose young take blood from her breast, a common medieval sign of Christ's sacrifice (fig. 182).

Viollet-le-Duc described the stranded state of cathedrals in modernity using a strangely funereal metaphor. He described them as "stripped bare today, mutilated by time and by the hand of man . . . our cathedrals loom like great coffins in the midst of our populous cities."[55] The creation of the chimeras came only months after he and Mérimée emerged victorious in the long battle between the church and the state for control of the structural repair of Gothic churches. On 7 March 1848 the Commission des arts et édifices religieux was created within the Ministère des cultes to ensure that architectural expertise was involved in any restoration program. A report by the two authors on the conservation and restoration of religious buildings, and of cathedrals in particular, was sent all over France. It made clear that these monuments were now under the jurisdiction of architects, not priests. The structures were monuments before they were places of worship.

182. Pelican in her piety (no. 35). MAP CNMHS.

Devout Catholics would of course have disagreed. For them Notre-Dame was not merely a building made of stone but a sacred and protected space filled with spirits. On 31 March 1864 the archbishop of Paris, Monsignor Georges Darboy, officiated at the opening ceremonies of the "new" cathedral surrounded by twelve bishops. Starting at seven o'clock in the morning there was a triple aspersion of the exterior church with holy water.[56] This was to ensure the expulsion of demons from the sacred space. In the thirteenth century the belief in demons was tangible, and the lost chimeras and gargoyles guarded the space of the church as apotropaic images. But did the new chimeras really guard the sacred space and those within from evils in the middle of the nineteenth century? The new demons that lurked outside the sacred precinct were of a different nature, and it is clear that some of Viollet-le-Duc's monsters of modernity served to represent rather than to exorcize evil. After performing the traditional consecration in the interior by inscribing in ashes the Greek and Latin alphabets, Archbishop Darboy consecrated the twelve crosses on twelve pillars. At 9:30 the faithful were admitted for the first mass.

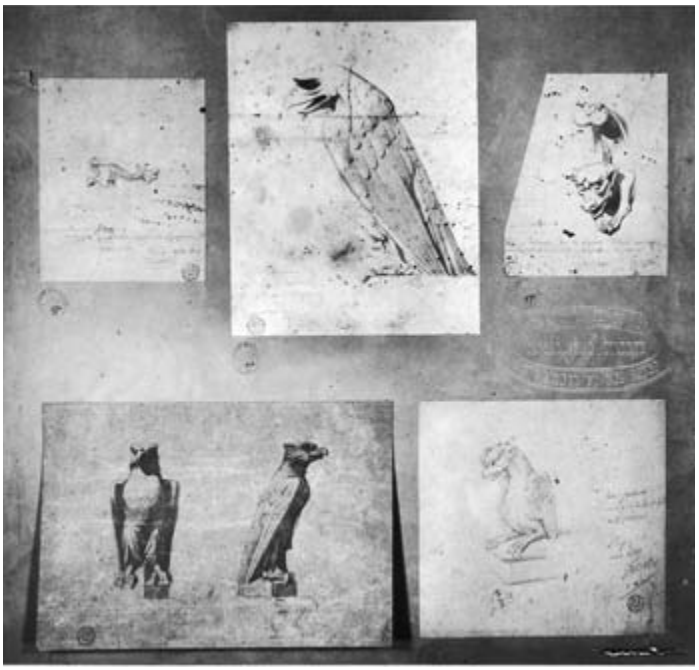
Unfortunately, Archbishop Darboy was to become the third prelate to fall victim to revolutionary violence. The first, Monsignor Denis-Auguste Affre, was shot at the barricades on 25 June 1848, and less than ten years later, on 3 January 1857, Monsignor Marie-Dominique-Auguste Sibour was stabbed in the nearby church of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont. Following in this venerable ecclesiastical tradition, Archbishop Darboy was taken hostage in the Commune and shot on 24 May 1871. Of course the deaths of all three men were celebrated as martyrdoms, with glorious, crowd-filled obsequies before and inside the cathedral of Notre-Dame. That of Sibour in 1857, seven years before the inauguration, was especially lavish and saw the whole west facade up to the gallery of kings covered in a black cloth.[57] This would have given the dragons, demons, and especially the owl (no. 27), harbinger of death, that crouched on the parapet a strangely unforseen and evil appearance. At the great funeral, the birds in their shrouds would have seemed so many carrion crows. The violent end met by three of the ecclesiastics in charge of the spiritual life of the cathedral in the nineteenth century is some index of the fraught situation of the church in this period. In this respect the strange birds that are among the most mysterious and ambiguous of Viollet-le-Duc's creations are portents, as birds traditionally are, of the dire ends and dangers that beset members of the cloth. Their shrouds are the winding sheets of the Parisian clergy. For the successors of these unfortunate ecclesiastics, looking up to the gallery as they made their first triumphal ecclesiastical entry into the cathedral, the chimeras might have seemed to gloat, as though the devil had indeed had the last laugh.

183. Small eagle on south transept buttress, Notre-Dame, Paris. (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

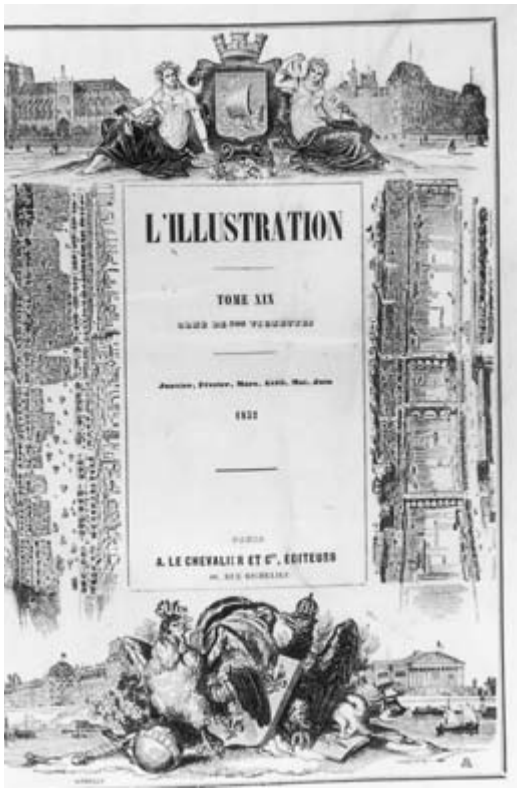
V · *The Eagle and the Emperor*

An entry in the *Journal des travaux* for 31 August 1853 states, "Two sculptors have begun the corner beast placed on the south portal in front representing a little eagle destined for the balustrade of the gallery."[58] The word *aiglon*, or "little eagle," was used at the time to describe none other than Napoléon III. When Louis-Napoléon nationalized the property of his enemies the Orleans family on 23 January 1852, the ex-president André-Marie-Jean-Jacques Dupin produced a pun that became a catchword: "C'est le premier vol de l'aigle" (It's the eagle's first flight/theft). So many of the bird-monsters created by Viollet-le-Duc are distortions, half cat, half crow, that we forget that at least five represent eagles, like that preserved on the balustrade of the grand gallery near the south transept (fig. 183). This was one of the last chimeras to be designed and completed, and it is clearly an imperial eagle looking out over an imperial city, ruled after 1853 by Napoléon III. Like the decision to represent some animals quite naturalistically, the appearance of some of the birds calls into question the programmatic quality of the series and raises some even more tantalizing issues about the changing political ideas of Viollet-le-Duc during these turbulent years.

Quite different was one of the earliest drawings for the great bird that Viollet-le-Duc designed in July 1848 (fig. 184). It is inscribed *moineau*, or "sparrow," a word



184. Viollet-le-Duc, drawings for various sculptures at Notre-Dame, including the great sparrow (no. 16; *top middle*), two views of an eagle (*bottom left*), and a dragon-bird (no. 8; *bottom right*), 1849. MAP (Photo: CNMHS.)



185. Eagle replaced by cock. Cover of *L'Illustration*, 1852.

derived from *moine*, or "monk," after its dark plumage. The eagle was at this revolutionary moment a highly negative heraldic animal, so Viollet-le-Duc avoided it, even though his giant bird with its satanic leer looks more like an eagle than a sparrow. These were the years, up until 1853, when the yearly cover of the journal *L'Illustration* pictured, as well as the cathedral of Notre-Dame in the top left corner, a vignette at the bottom of the page showing the republican cock trampling upon and victorious over the old imperial eagle (fig. 185). Once President Louis-Napoléon proclaimed himself emperor on 2 December 1852, however, such an image was out of the question. The next year's cover has a decorative scroll in the place of this avian allegory. The image of the eagle thus totally changed its meaning between 1848 and 1852. In 1852–53, when the "aiglon" was carved for the south transept, the image was no longer an innocent sign, but a political symbol of the new regime.[59]

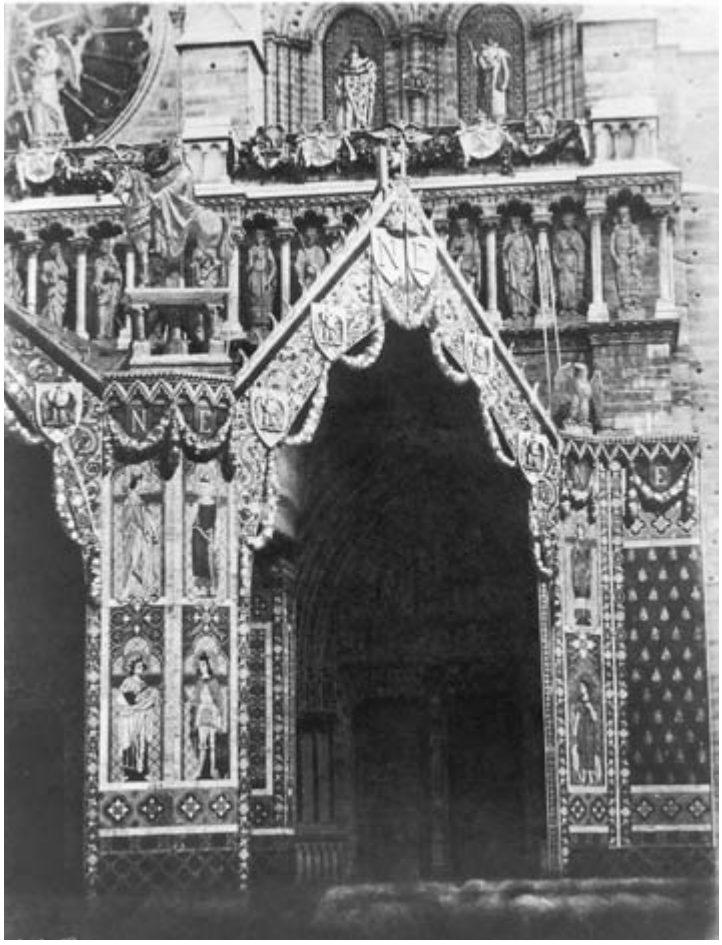
That the restorers placed an imperial eagle among the chimeras is not surprising. During the restoration Notre-Dame was used as the set for the staging of three crucial moments of imperial ambition: the Te Deum for the reelection of the then president Louis-Napoléon in January 1852, the marriage of the same man as the newly proclaimed emperor Napoléon III in January 1853, and the baptism of his firstborn son, the prince imperial, which founded his dynasty in 1856. In seeking to reconcile himself with the ancient rulers of France and mend the ruptures of two revolutions, those of 1789 and 1848, Louis-Napoléon's aim was not to return to a medieval, feudal France. The new Napoléon III would cast himself as the great modernizer who had been elected by popular vote. He has been seen as the first ruler to manipulate conflicting symbols in order to consolidate support and lend legitimacy to a fragile coalition of the bourgeois and clerical groups that supported him.

On 23 December 1851, Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc were instructed by the minister of the interior to make all the necessary arrangements for "a solemn Te Deum to be chanted in the cathedral on the occasion of the reelection of the president of the republic."[60] The *Journal des travaux* announced that on 1 January 1852 "the president of the republic made his entrance into the cathedral." Reenacting the Napoleonic myth—a paradoxically authoritarian democracy, based on what Bonaparte called "confidence from below, authority from above"—Louis-Napoléon had restored universal suffrage in order to hold a plebiscite concerning the coup. Seven million Frenchmen had voted for his regime, and Notre-Dame was the great stage set chosen to celebrate this triumph. Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc received instructions directly from Louis-Napoléon's half-brother, the duc de Morny, and they sent him a detailed description of their plans. Given only eight days to complete the work, they were issued the considerable sum of 125,000 francs to stage the show. One has to remember that only a year before, all restoration work on the cathedral had stopped because of lack of funds. All through Christmas the men who had previously been focused on restoring a thirteenth-century monument to its former splendor were now busy making the cathedral into an image of a new political regime. In the accounts of the "projet de decoration," none other than the sculptor of the chimeras, Victor Pyanet, is listed under "sculpteur," and Geoffroy-Dechaume under "statuaire." Much of their effort must have been spent on enriching the interior, specifically the vast canopy and "seat of honor" (which the Austrian attaché regarded as a throne). The exterior of the church was covered with a large awning bearing the letters "L-N" for Louis-Napoléon. "Trompe l'oeil" fake sculptures in the form of flat painted representations of Charlemagne, Saint Louis, Louis XIV, and Napoléon decorated the towers. In large gilded letters above the entrance to the cathedral was the number of "yes" votes

186. Inauguration of Louis-Napoléon, 1 January 1852. From *The Illustrated London News*. (Photo: BNF.)

counted in the plebiscite, 7,500,000. As contemporary depictions show, anything that Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc might have achieved thus far in terms of restoring the stones of the cathedral's west facade was obliterated by cardboard kings, pennons, flags, and banners (fig. 186). The cathedral had for centuries been the locus of major national celebrations which had involved covering the cathedral facade with whatever architectural style was fashionable at the time. Until the time of Napoléon I, the decoration had generally been neoclassical. However, when Jean-François-Joseph Lecointe and Jacques-Ignace Hittorff redecorated the cathedral for the baptism of the duc de Bordeaux in 1821, they had adopted Gothic elements, though, typically, they effaced the actual structure. What made Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc's decoration for the Te Deum different was that they exploited rather than hid the church's medieval architecture. Viollet-le-Duc himself published an article on the transformation of Notre-Dame for the ceremony in the *Revue générale de l'architecture et des travaux publics*.[61]

Viollet-le-Duc had taken a political role as the Gothic impresario of imperial power. This was the period when funds had been exhausted and restoration had stopped. He was awaiting action on the new estimate he had submitted in December 1850, which had been interrupted by the coup d'état on 2 December 1851. A year later, soon after declaring himself emperor, Napoléon III had made another visit to the cathedral in the company of Archbishop Sibour, who urged the emperor to release



187. Henri Le Secq, south portal of Notre-Dame decorated for the marriage of the emperor, 30 January 1853. Bibliothèque de l'histoire de la ville de Paris. (Photo: BHVP.)

the funds requested by the architect. This combination of politics and religion was even more evident in their decorations for the cathedral erected for the emperor's marriage on 30 January 1853. A photograph of the right portal by Henri Le Secq (fig. 187) reveals that the Old Testament figures toppled from their niches in the Revolution were replaced for the occasion by flat, painted simulacra.

All this evokes what Karl Marx described in 1852 in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. He portrayed Louis-Napoléon's coup d'état as a derivative copy, an imitation, of Napoléon I's overthrow of the Revolutionary Directory in 1799. The liberal aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville also saw the tragedy played a second time as farce: "The imitation was so visible that the terrible originality of the facts remained hidden."[62] And Victor Hugo lamented in *Notre-Dame de Paris*, "Our fathers had a Paris of stone; our sons will have a Paris of plaster."[63] At the center of the new ersatz imperial reality stood the emperor Napoléon, instantly viewed in 1852 by a broad group of critics as a pale imitation of his illustrious uncle. The Second Empire seemed founded upon a programmatic politics of sham.[64]

Amid all this imperial history-making the eagle stands out, visible on the shields

188. Eagle eating grapes (no. 19). MAP CNMHS. (Photo: Jannie Mayer.)

decorating the velvet curtains over the portal and standing proudly on the left with wings outstretched. The government had already reestablished the figure on the flagstaffs of the army the year before at another lavish public ceremony held at the Champ de Mars attended by all the clergy of Paris (over one thousand ecclesiastics). Louis-Napoléon was then still president when he gave to each colonel new standards topped by gilt eagles. In a speech he praised Napoléon's eagle as "the most striking illustration of the regeneration of the grandeur of France"; having disappeared during France's period of "misfortunes," it was now restored "as the symbol of our independence, as the *souvenir* of an heroic epoch."[65]

On 16 March 1856 the most spectacular ceremony yet—an imperial baptism—was held at Notre-Dame, once again supervised by the Gothic impresarios Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc. They did their most lavish work yet, spending four hundred thousand francs on a painted interior with false stained glass windows painted on transparent paper. Prosper Mérimée judged their efforts such a success that he declared that they had returned Notre-Dame to the state of "a true church of the thirteenth century." A historian of these imperial rituals, Matthew Truesdell, has noted how reports of the mass response to these events differed acording to what side of the political fence one was on. According to Bonapartist newspapers the baptism drew enthusiastic crowds outside Notre-Dame who cried "Vive l'empereur!" and the populace showed "unbounded enthusiasm," in the words of the emperor's American dentist. The *Illustrated London News*, by contrast, found that the event "failed to waken any demonstration of heartfelt welcome or applause," and the Austrian ambassador found the

189. Eagle and lion-man (nos. 12 and 13). (Photo: Stuart Michaels.)

190. Eagle and dragon above buttress on south transept balustrade. MAP CNMHS.

191. Honoré Daumier, "The Book will Kill the Eagle." From Victor Hugo, *Châtiments*, 1872. Lithograph. (Photo: Art Institute of Chicago.)

people "indifferent and impassive. One would have said they were people at a play they did not understand and the name of which they did not find worth asking."[66]

Between the time when Viollet-le-Duc made his first drawings of the eagle for the balustrade in 1848, when France was at the dawn of a new democratic era, and the baptism of the prince imperial eight years later, the interpretation and meaning of this symbolic creature had undergone a profound change. Some of the chimeras, like the superb eagle devouring grapes (no. 19; fig. 188), were already carved and in place when the imperial marriage took place in 1853, and all were finished for the baptism of the prince imperial. Are we meant to see the strange, boggle-eyed birds and flapping, catlike creatures as parodies of the imperial ideal? On the balustrade itself these winged creatures are, for the most part, signs of evil, not of power, and this perhaps explains Viollet-le-Duc's ambivalence. This is especially true of the juxtaposition of the rapacious eagle, a creature caught in its claws, and the lion-man on the inner part of the north tower balustrade (nos. 12 and 13; fig. 189). Here two symbols beloved of the first Napoléon—the lion and the eagle—screech petulantly as if from the side corridors of history.

Again representing something of a post-1853 imperial addition to the chimera program is the magnificent though maleficent-looking eagle on the pedestal surmounting the western summit of the buttress to the south transept (fig. 190). Whereas the painted eagles of the ephemeral fete were soon forgotten, these stone birds are emblems of more long-lasting power. Or at least, in terms of the volatile politics of nineteenth-century France, the power of a regime that would last until the next revolution. This came in 1870. Victor Hugo had published his magnificently vituperative poems against the emperor, *Châtiments*, in 1853 but Daumier was able to publish his image of the imperial eagle struck down by the force of the poet's words only in 1872, after the fall of the Second Empire (fig. 191). Here the book has killed the bird rather than the building, a bird whose place on Notre-Dame might have provoked the same response but that, interestingly, no one sought to remove after the empire's fall.

Viollet-le-Duc, like his own eagles, held a somewhat ambiguous position vis-à-vis the Second Empire. He had, after all, in 1830 fought on the barricades as an idealistic romantic youth. In 1870 the barricades went up again, but this time he was not on the side of revolution, and the Commune condemned him to death for collaboration with the regime. He fled the city but returned after the demise, a few weeks later, of the government with which he had worked so closely. In the same year his closest friend and the man who had helped him rise to the position he had held for three decades, Prosper Mérimée, died. This was another blow that resulted in his withdrawal from public life and his focus on publishing his voluminous writings. It must have seemed a far cry from the heady years around the middle of the century when he was in charge of the most important restoration project of the century and, like a god, had power over the life and death of monuments. This omniscience is suggested in a humorous letter sent to him in May 1852 by his old friend when Mérimée was still inspector general of historic monuments. In the usual genial way it informed him not only about Louis-Napoléon's "indifference" to their project but also of rumors circulating at court about his work at Notre-Dame. "This evening I went to Saint Cloud, where the emperor laughingly said to me, 'It appears that you and Viollet-le-Duc are going to destroy Notre-Dame.' I assured him that we would leave something."[67] So what did the architects eventually leave, and what did Parisians finally think when, in 1864, after so many years of work and in the last four years of the glittering facade that was the Second Empire, Notre-Dame—finished—was opened to the public?

Epilogue to Part I

THE GARGOYLES RESTORED (1864)

To restore an edifice does not mean to maintain, to repair or to remake, but to reestablish it in a complete state such as might never have existed at any given moment.

VIOLLET-LE-DUC, "RESTORATION," in *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française*[1]

When the new cathedral was finished, looking like it had never looked before, with its company of strange creatures peering out over Paris and its legion of gargoyles, it represented Viollet-le-Duc's "timeless" monument to a moment that never was. In trying to forget time and its inexorable momentum, or at least stand outside it, Viollet-le-Duc had reduced what was in fact an edifice of multiple pasts into a unified and much more harmonius unity. But the past does not stay still. It is as contentious and changing as the present. First conceived by Lassus and himself as part of that idealistic republican rush toward all things medieval, the great facade now faced a very different France from that of twenty years before. Of the three most powerful groups that had appropriated the neo-Gothic for their own political purposes in the previous decades, the ecclesiastical and aristocratic camps had by this date lost to what François Loyer has called "the triumph of the neo-Gothic bourgeois" with Viollet-le-Duc as its leader.[2] But the bourgeois Gothic that created schools, town halls, and post offices throughout France in this style was no longer à la mode in advanced circles.[3] Writers like Joseph-Ernest Renan, Théophile Gautier, and Hippolyte-Adolphe Taine, as well as those who had previously admired the Gothic, like Quinet and Michelet, now shivered with distaste and came to see the Middle Ages as a period filled with fear and irrationality. It was too close to the false facade of the emperor and his castles and seemed escapist in the light of the rapid industrialization and modernization of French society during this boom period. This change in public mood affected the reception of the newly restored cathedral. Michelet had come to see it as a monument to Christian oppression rather than to what he had once described as its philosophical order: Notre-Dame as an edifice built not out of communality and faith but on the bones of thousands of heretics, tainted by centuries of cruelty and horror played

out on its parvis, where innocent people had been tortured and burned alive.[4] He had written in his journal at the commencement of the restoration on 1 April 1844, "They are going to scrape Notre-Dame" (On va gratter Notre Dame), and on 1 January 1863 he noted "the restoration of Notre-Dame, naked and very lightened" (la restauration de Notre Dame, nue et fort éclairée). For the same price as two restorations of Notre-Dame, he complained, one could have funded the building of another, more vital church and one more in accordance with God's notion of universal education for the poor.[5] For the republican journalist Léon Laurent-Pichat, writing in 1859, there was even something menacing in what emerged from Gothic monuments, their "grimacing sculptures . . . a dance macabre carved in stone. The portals, the facades . . . cried, 'You must die!'"[6] Another journalist, in an article entitled "Le Romantisme catholico-féodal," attacked Viollet-le-Duc and his followers for presenting modernity with an architecture of death in which only moribund fantasies of the past—"ghouls, genies, salamanders, vampires, dwarves, dragons, tarasques, gargoyles"—had been brought back to life.[7] No longer creatures of delightful Gothic fantasy, the chimeras were seem by some as carrion crows feeding on the church's corpse, signs of decay, oppression, and darkness.

It was a sculptor, Antoine Étex, who published the most blistering attack on the new Notre-Dame: "Here we are facing the church of Notre-Dame de Paris. In the presence of this black mass, flanked by two great feudal towers, pitted with holes as though sculpted by chance by a formidable artillery, I ask myself, is it really true that it is beautiful? . . . Then I take a turn around the edifice. If the facade displeases me, the sides displease me even further. I cannot comprehend why this barbarous work has found so many admirers! . . . Monsters, spikes, gargoyles, all this grotesque horde makes faces at me; this is all baroque, this all crawls and, like a carnivalesque charivari, makes an infernal din in the ears of pure and chaste harmony. . . . And it is in the midst of these dreadful things, these often indecent horrors, that we as children learn to pray to God."[8] It is hardly surprising that Étex could declaim, "Your gutters, your striking stone gargoyles, no longer reassure me."[9] According to T. J. Clark, Étex was "a decent Republican, something of a radical in his way (. . . in December [1851] he marched with Hugo to resist the *coup d'état*). . . . He had studied in Rome, and had waited fifteen years for a chance to do the work he planned. It hardly mattered if the work itself was clumsy, obscure, badly carved; the state could hardly refuse the offer."[10] Étex is best remembered for his neoclassicizing reliefs on the Arc de Triomphe celebrating the resistance of the French in 1814. This was exactly the kind of art that Clark goes on to describe as inadequate: "State art was a failure. It failed to find a form for the revolution, it failed to decide on a style for public statement, it never escaped from a stifling tradition."[11] The only exception to this disastrous era

of public art produced between 1848 and 1852 was the chimeras of Notre-Dame, which, unlike the statues of Étex and others, went on to become beloved and tenacious emblems of Parisian identity.

Although the new cathedral was not officially consecrated at an elaborate ceremony until 31 March 1864, the writer Jules-Antoine Castagnary, in an article in the *Courier du dimanche,* described the excitement among Parisians when the scaffolding was finally removed the Christmas before. But he also could not hide his disappointment at its newness, which prompted him to some remarkable ruminations on the relationship between restoration and the loss of memory.

> Today, December 25, Christmas day, the 1862nd anniversary of the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the old basilica of Notre-Dame, restored, is cleared of its scaffolding and reappears, to the astonished eyes of Parisians, just as its first founders could have imagined it. After ten years of delicate and hazardous work she has recovered her gracious and masculine beauty, her severe and moving grandeur. . . . I am, in part, one of those who believes that decay befits an old monument. It gives a monument an almost human physiognomy, marked by its age, and, witnessing its suffering, reveals the spirit of generations which it has seen pass at its feet. . . . Might the chipped stones speak to the imagination of the people in a seditious language? . . . And were this the case, what unfortunate result might one fear?
>
> Ah! reply the partisans of the past, if we allowed old monuments this freedom of speech; if, by each hole, by each wound, by each mutilation, they could thus perpetually cry and repeat to those newly arrived the stories of the old ones that have gone. . . . If the people of Paris, awaking tomorrow in an entirely new city and casting their eyes upon these renovated monuments, were to think themselves new! If they could, like those sick people who lose their memory forever, never have to remember again![12]

Parisians were not amnesiacs, however. They did not wake up one morning to find a new cathedral in their midst. As slowly but as inexorably as Notre-Dame had been restored, old Paris had also been transformed before their eyes. The anxieties that this process aroused are powerfully visualized in a series of articles in the *Journal amusant* written and illustrated by Émile Marcelin that contrast Paris of yesterday to Paris of today. In the issue published on 9 February 1856 Marcelin presents a ghoulish dual female personification of Paris presiding over the transformation from death to life. Although the bright new boulevards on the right are as exaggerated as the dark medieval hovels on the left, there is a clear association between things medieval and the crooked, dark, and dirty (fig. 192). This same contrast, though focusing more on the massive demolitions that reduced vast tracts of the city to rubble in these years,

192. Marcelin [Émile Planat], "Paris Yesterday and Today." From *Le Journal amusant*, 9 February 1856.

193. Marcelin [Émile Planat], "Paris Demolished." From *Le Journal pour rire*, 31 March 1855.

appeared in a special issue of the previous March entitled "Paris Démoli." The issue opens hilariously, as it compares the ruins of the Parthenon and Pompeii with the brand-new ruins of Paris created by the extension of the rue de Rivoli. The cover illustration shows the Tour Saint-Jacques collapsing, although surrounded by scaffolding, amid half-timbered houses and turrets toppling like rows of playing cards (fig. 193). Gargoyles are mentioned twice in this article, both times as quaint nuisances of the cramped, dark, old Paris. Yet it would be wrong to assume that this article is a simple rejection of the past in favor of the clean, wide streets of the future. In one remarkable passage the half-demolished stones of the old city seem to come to life in a strange graveyard of forms: "Across the faces of the walls which overhang on every side, the windows without frames stare at you like eyes without eyelids; the beams of roofs without tiles show their denuded carcasses like so many fantastic skeletons of antediluvian animals; on every corner, pieces of beams break away, like amputated limbs, creaking like cries; instead of chimneys great serpents of soot creep along the walls like great lizards at the witching hour warming themselves by the moonlight. . . . Here lies old Paris."[13]

194. Georges-Eugène Haussmann's demolitions on the Île-de-la-Cité, 1867. BNF.

These last words were also written, metaphorically at least, on the cathedral—whose vast stone facade became the tombstone marking the grave of the medieval city. For Notre-Dame stood no longer at the center of a dark, dense cluster of medieval dwelling places but was stranded in the midst of a modern metropolis. A photograph of 1864 shows that just as the brand-new medieval cathedral had been completed, the heart of the city in which it had been embedded for six hundred years was in the process of being torn down (fig. 194). Georges-Eugène Haussmann, the prefect of Paris and its environs, armed with the imperial mandate of Napoléon III, blasted his new network of boulevards through the Right Bank and created such upheavals in the urban lanscape on the Île-de-la-Cité that the popular way of perceiving the cathedral itself underwent a massive metamorphosis. One of Haussmann's pet projects was the cleanup of the island itself, which until the 1850s had been crammed with shacks and makeshift shanties, filling every inch of available space abutting the church and housing the poorest of the city in one of the worst slums of Paris. Balzac had compared these old neighborhoods to the darkest jungles of Africa, while for Eugène Sue they epitomized "the mysteries of Paris." Haussmann had a phobia of dirt, making a direct conection between filth and disease.[14] The tanners, wretched artisans working in their apartments, were driven from the Île-de-la-Cité between 1853 and 1865, displacing some 350,000 people. Haussmann's powers were considerably strengthened by a decree of September 1858 which authorized the condemnation of property specifically in order to achieve "alignement," the creation of notorious rectilinear geometries which defined Haussmannization.

In the years that followed, the church became increasingly isolated from anything around it. In 1865 Haussmann made the parvis forty times its original size. Already in 1837 the conservative Schmit had written of the project to demolish the old Hôtel-Dieu hospital. "Our beautiful basilica, seen from the other side of the river, today represents a large elephant in the middle of the desert. If one pursues the project of clearing the whole portion of the Hôtel-Dieu that remains on the Cité, the elephant will no longer be anything but a squatting dromedary." The liberal Montalembert, in 1845, had also described the error of isolating the church, since medieval buildings of such size needed smaller edifices around them: "Total isolation is fatal to them" (L'isolement absolu leur est fatale).[15] These warnings went unheeded. Haussmann coupled large-scale clearance with the development of three institutions already established on the Cité, creating a new type of *quartier* with specifically administrative functions. It brought together the vast new building of the Hôtel-Dieu to the north, the Palais de Justice, and the Prefecture of Police.[16] In 1865 Castagnary described this process of centralization focused around the three monuments on the Cité—the Church of Notre-Dame, the Palais de Justice, and the Hôtel-Dieu—as expressing the "inevitable trinity, the essential forces of all developed societies: *Religion*, *Justice* and *Charity*."[17] As David Jordan describes, "once the home of king and court, bishop and hierarchy . . . the Ile was now not even a museum. It was a kind of midway filled with public buildings unrelated to one another by style, function or history."[18] Conservative Catholic critics of the period like Louis Veuillot were scandalized: "This new Paris will never have its own history, and it will surely lose the history it once had. All traces of the former city have been erased for those who are under thirty years of age. Even if the old monuments are still standing, they no longer articulate anything, since everything around them has changed. Notre-Dame and the Tour Saint-Jacques are as out of place as the obelisk, for they, too, seem to have been imported from elsewhere, like some sort of frivolous curiosity item."[19]

The new urbanism also changed people's relationship to the idea of Paris and especially to the public fantasy embodied in the forms of the monstrous chimeras. It is interesting in this respect to compare what critics said about the restoration of the old monument with what they said about a new monument of fantasy: Gabriel-Jean-Antoine Davioud's Fontaine Saint Michel of 1860 (fig. 195). Castagnary wrote in the same year as he described the restored cathedral of how this new monument, built by the city of Paris at the vast cost of nearly five hundred thousand francs, "highlights one of the great moral facts of our epoch: socialism vanquished or even converted by empire."[20] He points out the two bronze chimeras, each accompanied by a little genie in an attitude of triumph, which represent "false systems, bad doctrines, detestable errors born under the republic of 1848 . . . seated on their haunches, henceforth

195. G.-J.-A. Davioud, Fontaine Saint Michel, Paris, 1860. (Photo: James Austin.)

powerless." He notes the linking of the emperor's eagle with the triumphal image of the archangel and how little angels symbolize the "the old royalist and religious parties."[21] While the author has no problems with the legitimate use of such symbols, he has grave doubts about the artistic value of the whole monument, which he attacks for its stylistic vulgarity and slick hybridity. The monstrous for him, too, had become a form of meaningless decoration. "M. Jacquemart, who has executed the two dragons placed in the tympana of the frieze and the two chimeras of the ground level, proves here his imagination and at the same time his ability and knowledge. Although it is not easy to judge the anatomy of a chimera, his appear to be wisely constructed; they are treated with great character and have a beautiful effect."[22] Edmond de Goncourt described these same monsters at the base of the Fontaine Saint Michel as "stupid" in comparison with far more terrifying Oriental examples, calling the Saint Michel creatures monsters made by "members of the institute."[23] By contrast, these were the very years when the chimeras of Notre-Dame began to stir the imaginations of Parisians and visitors from all around the world as magnificent and thoroughly modern (medieval) monsters.

They began to do this not because they stood for the triumph of Second Empire or for any political regime, in fact. By 1864 the chimeras no longer resonated with the

cries of revolution or reaction, outlined earlier in part 1. In the public life of monuments meanings are not fixed but are constantly changing, responding not only to the urge to remember but also to the need to forget. Most people after 1870 wanted to forget the empire and remember instead the mythic old Paris it had nearly erased. T. J. Clark has described how "ever since 1830 . . . men and women had believed that their Paris was disappearing and a new one springing up complete upon its ruins; and that that belief is best understood as a fantasy, almost a wish fulfilment. . . . Haussmann's work for the most part colluded with that fantasy."[24] One could add that so did Viollet-le-Duc's chimeras. These sculptures became in many ways a response, an aporia in people's imaginations, for once completed they provided a site of fantasy, a place to mourn the disappearance of the dark, winding streets of the old city. It was in the broader context of the destruction and modernization of the city under Haussmann that the future role of the chimeras and gargoyles of Notre-Dame gradually took shape. Already by the late 1850s they had become mythic images in a new Parisian imaginary being developed by poets like Charles Baudelaire and artists like Charles Méryon, to be discussed in the second part of this study.

Precisely because they were themselves replacements, stand-ins for forms that were imagined to have once been there but which had long since disappeared, they could function from the very beginning as emblems of loss. Indeed, almost immediately, because of their highly exposed position, they began to look old, to weather, to begin embodying the inexorable processes of time and decay. In creating the chimeras Viollet-le-Duc produced modernity's first ready-made ruins. Ruins embody the damage and destruction without which the past does not exist.[25] The chimeras were in this sense emblems not of restoration but rather of destruction. They radically undermined the whole project of Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc. As the restoration's unconscious, they returned the repressed ruin to its central place upon the facade. They kept the building alive by haunting it, by remembering in their paroxysms and screams the death and decay that Viollet-le-Duc thought he was replacing with his new, ideal thirteenth-century cathedral. The real inhabitants of the church welcomed the visitor from their balcony. This was the stone society of chimeras, half hidden and perched precariously on the edge, who became the site of individual identification and collective empathy for future generations of beholders far more than any of the prophets and saints standing alongside the portals below. As we shall see, one could climb up and stand among them, become an intimate of these diabolical beings, whose gaze seemed to respond to the pulse and life of the modern city below them in a way that the vacant stare of the Virgin Mary did not. If the ruined past was the only religion in which Parisians still seemed to have faith, the chimeras of Notre-Dame constituted its Parisian pantheon and the melancholy demon was its god.

196. Adolphe-Victor Geoffroy-Dechaume, Viollet-le-Duc in the guise of the Apostle Thomas, spire of Notre-Dame, 1857. Bronze statue. MAP CNMHS.

Viollet-le-Duc found his own place on Notre-Dame, far above the social and political turmoil of the streets and even higher up than his rowdy chimeras. He appears as one of sixteen green copper repoussé statues of evangelists and apostles that ascend his new central spire, which he designed in 1857 but which was not completed until 1862. His statue, placed on the south side of the spire and closest to its top, was created by the sculptor Geoffroy-Dechaume following an 1861 sketch by the architect himself (fig. 196).[26] Wearing the costume of a medieval mason, his tunic pinned with a thirteenth-century brooch, in one hand he holds the straight rule. This fancy dress was meant to represent Saint Thomas, the apostle who was also a master builder and patron saint of architects. Surmounting the very pinnacle, the highest human point of the monument he so lovingly restored in a way no medieval architect would have ever dared to, Viollet-le-Duc appears as master of the earthly building. As he gazes upward, his left hand bent to touch his knitted brow, it is as though, with great effort and mental concentration, he were "imagining" the medieval cathedral back into being. He is no more able to see God through the clouds than is the melancholy demon, who has paradoxically usurped Viollet-le-Duc's place as the "thinker" of Notre-Dame.

This is an idealizing image, far removed from the architect-restorer's actual experience in the years following the completion of the project. The same year the new cathedral was unveiled, Viollet-le-Duc faced one of the most difficult professional challenges of his career, which shows just what a precarious and marginal position he held and how powerful his enemies still were. This was when he took up his post

as the new professor of art history and aesthetics at the École des beaux-arts. His appointment was part of the attempted reforms of the powerful institution undertaken by the emperor's arts minister, the superintendent des beaux-arts, Count Alfred Émilien de Nieuwerkerke. To the fury of the still staunchly neoclassical academicians these reforms proposed radical changes in the curriculum, which involved teaching the history of French and not only Greek and Roman monuments and brought the school under direct control of the state. Accompanied by his old friend Prosper Mérimée and Théophile Gautier, who was to write an account of the inaugural lecture for the *Moniteur*, Viollet-le-Duc took the speaker's chair on 29 January 1864. The front rows of the hall were filled with state officials and supporters, and the students were allowed in only at the last moment to fill the back rows. He began his lecture, but only got as far as the first word of his address—"Messieurs"—when each student began to imitate the noise of a particular animal. The packed hall was filled with the sounds of elephants trumpeting, birds screeching, cats mewing, lions roaring, and dogs yapping. Hardly audible above the bestial din, the flustered lecturer tried to present his theories of the spiritual origins of architecture and criticized Hindu temples as being the products an inferior race.[27] For thirty minutes Viollet-le-Duc faced screaming open mouths and spitting tongues. The students hurled eggs, potatoes, and paper bullets as well as verbal insults throughout the address. It was not until six lectures later that the "grand bruit" finally abated, but after the seventh Viollet-le-Duc had had enough. He tendered his resignation. It was as though his own grimacing gargoyles and screaming chimeras had come to life, just as they would many times over the next one hundred and fifty years, to taunt and mock the man who made them possible.

PART II

Reproduction

197. Charles Méryon, *Le Stryge*. Etching with drypoint, brown ink on greenish-ivory chine, fifth state with inscriptions and verse, 169 × 130 mm. Art Institute of Chicago, Clarence L. Buckingham Collection.

6. Monsters of Melancholy

THE GARGOYLES OF CHARLES MÉRYON

"This monster that I have represented does exist, and is in no way a work of imagination."[1] Charles Méryon (1821–68) penned this line to his father on 17 April 1854. The monster to which he was referring was the statue of the melancholy demon on the western balustrade of Notre-Dame. He represented it in an etching which he had already sent to his father in a previous letter. This tiny image—small enough to fit inside an envelope, was the launching pad from which the monumental stone chimeras created by Viollet-le-Duc and Lassus at Notre-Dame began their momentous afterlife in the next century-and-a-half of reproductions, both manual and mechanical (fig. 197). The recipient of this print, Dr. Charles Lewis Méryon, the artist's English father, never really knew his illegitimate offspring, who was the unwanted product of a youthful indiscretion with a dancer at the Paris Opéra. Méryon's mother had died young in a mental institution, and his father had allowed his son to assume his name only in 1836, at the age of fifteen. As young Charles complained to him in another letter, "I was born to be unhappy, to continually blush for my illegitimate birth. . . . Oh, if you could repair the fate you made for me, poor father, how happy I would be!"[2] In the vast scholarship on this artist little is made of the fact that Méryon sent his father a monster that in a sense he claimed was not his.[3] This disavowal of his own artistic progeny shows the artist starting to confuse the demon with his own paralytic sadness, a being which, with its chin resting on its hands as if to provide a base for the staring orbits of its dark eyes, no longer represents the medieval sin of *acedia*, the sin of sloth and inactivity, but a subjective intensification linked to genius as well as madness, empowerment as well as illness, that was modern melancholia.[4]

Over the next decade Méryon, in various mental states, returned again and again to alter the metal plates of his monster to produce no fewer than ten successive "states" of the etching. The print contained in Méryon's earlier letter to his father was the fourth state (fig. 197). This contained two verses describing the demon as the vampire of lust that must forever feed its insatiable desire. The word "etching" derives from the German word for "to bite" or "to feed." It involved making careful incisions on a prepared metal plate, which were then eaten away when placed in acid, forming the grooves which then held the ink in the printing process. Further scratch-

ing at the surface, or drypoint, allowed the plate to be worked and reworked over and over again. Even before Méryon's early death in the Charenton asylum in 1868, his print had become one of the most sought after, admired, and reproduced prints of the century. And more than any monument in stone, it established the future identity of the greatest "gargoyle" of Notre-Dame.[5]

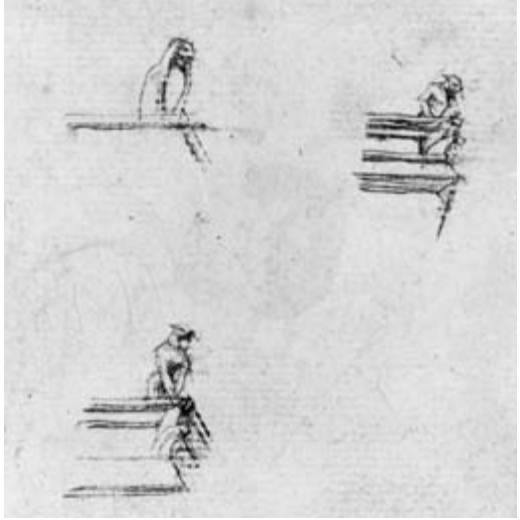
The immediate and lasting impact of Méryon's etching upon the graphic imagination of the later nineteenth century is less surprising considering its origins in the graphic studies of Viollet-le-Duc, the "grand dessinateur." What must have been a splendid two-dimensional image in the architect's lost drawing for the chimera (see fig. 54) had then been translated into three dimensions by Victor Pyanet (see figs. 1, 55, and 89), only to be resituated in an altogether different two-dimensional existence by Charles Méryon. No longer a single, unique thing, located in a particular place, the Stryge was reborn to truly chimerical life in the multiple channels of nineteenth-century print culture. Yet like the myriad that Christ cast out of the demoniac whose name was Legion, "for I am many," Méryon's mutable demon was always, tragically, his alone.

1 · *The Stryge's Sex*

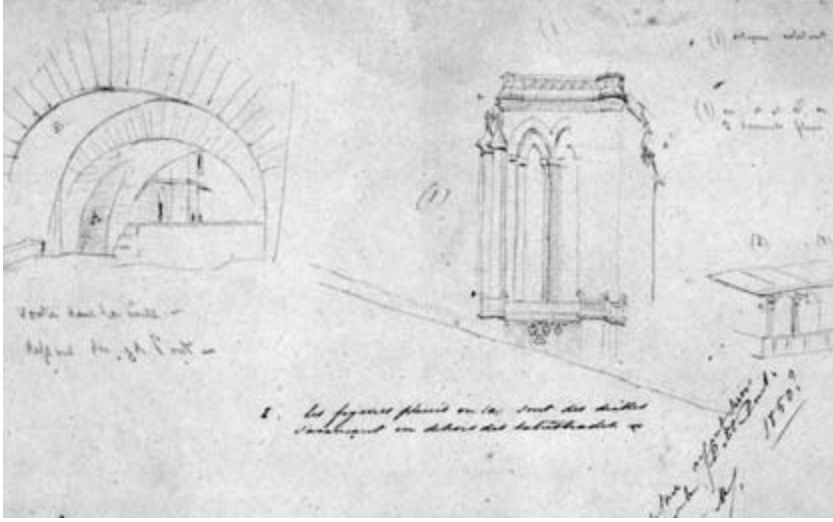
For the melancholic the phantom (the incorporated object) is the only partner.

NICOLAS ABRAHAM AND MARIA TOROK, *The Shell and the Kernel*[6]

Méryon was interned at the asylum at Charenton for the first time from May 1858 to August 1859, following years of increasing nervous agitation. There the celebrated Dr. L. F. Calmeil proclaimed him to be "suffering from melancholy madness [*delire mélancholique*] . . . , complicated by delusions" and diagnosed him as a "congenital idiot [*fou de naissance*]."[7] At the request of Geoffroy-Dechaume, the sculptor in charge of the restoration at Notre-Dame, he was visited there by none other than Viollet-le-Duc. The architect gave him a little drawing of his own, which Méryon later etched as "Paysage avec Ruines des Pierrefonds."[8] Only five years before, Viollet-le-Duc had, metaphorically, "given" the etcher another image—the carved demon that Méryon had far more completely made his own. The restorer's visit to the hospitalized artist speaks of an understanding between them—perhaps an awareness on Viollet-le-Duc's part that the gifted young printmaker had seen and understood something new and powerful, something modern in his still unfinished, half-restored chimeras. Viollet-le-Duc in fact owned a number of superb early proofs of Méryon's print.[9] In order to produce this etching Méryon would have had to climb up to the balustrade of the cathedral with his sketchbook not that long after Pyanet had laid down his chisel and the statue had been hoisted into place. Viollet-le-Duc had allowed



198. Charles Méryon, three small studies of the chimeras of Notre-Dame, Paris. BNF.



199. Charles Méryon, three studies, one of the south tower of Notre-Dame, Paris, with chimeras. BNF.

200. Charles Méryon, *Le Petit Pont* (detail showing chimeras). Etching with engraving, sixth state.

201. Henri Le Secq, *Maison du quai du Marché-Neuf et Petit Pont*, 1852. BHVP.

photographer friends to come and record his work, and artists must have also been welcome even while the scaffolding was in place.

Méryon had in fact already been drawing the chimeras from the safe distance of the Quai de la Tournelle far below. A series of preparatory sketches which the artist made for his first large-scale etching, *Le Petit Pont* (1850), isolates three of the beasts, including the shrouded bird (fig. 198). In another drawing he locates them in their positions below the towers and writes, "The figures placed here are the devils emerging from out of the balustrades" (Les figures placées là sont des diables s'avançant en dehors des balustrades) (fig. 199). Méryon was clearly fascinated by these splendid, new creatures that appeared on the Paris skyline and was the first artist to record them, in his *Le Petit Pont* of 1850 (fig. 200).[10] They appear much larger in the etching than in a contemporary photograph of the facade from much the same viewpoint by Henri Le Secq (fig. 201). The notion that Méryon was an exact and minute transcriber

of reality makes little sense here; as in all his work there is a sense of things stared-at for so long that the gaze has pushed through to the other side of the real, to a parallel universe where everything is identical but slightly, oddly different. We do not know how long after Méryon had made the sketches of the monsters from below he had the opportunity to climb up among them.

His viewpoint, to the left of the statue on the adjacent parapet and looking out toward the Right Bank with the Tour Saint-Jacques beyond, has become so well known that it is hard to see its originality. We have to imagine Méryon's surprise on first stepping out from the spiral staircase into the sunlight and discovering this totally new and unique sculpture, feeling its uncanny presence from this vantage point for the first time. Not so much part of a restored Gothic cathedral as a rocky promontory, it would have appeared to be something primeval, something that he alone had discovered. In a letter to his old sailor-friend Antoine-Edouard Foley, Méryon had in fact described the facade of Rouen Cathedral as resembling rocks corroded by the sea. "This comparison perhaps seems bizarre to you," he wrote, "but you would find it just if you could see the old debris of the first period of Gothic architecture."[11] Insisting in the letter to his father that this image he had found at Notre-Dame was not *his*, he seems to suggest not that it is somebody else's—that is, Viollet-le-Duc's—but that it simply exists in nature.

What he found carved into the "rock" of the cathedral was a newly finished creation of the romantic imagination, but he treated it as if it were a ghostly trace, a vestige of the darkest Middle Ages, or even a prehistoric sign, left in its mysterious vacancy to mourn over the modern city. Crucially for us who have done the same for over a hundred years now, Méryon did not see the monster as medieval, or as the modern restoration that he knew had just been freshly carved, but as a timeless symbol. Many modern commentators on Méryon's work are so bewitched by the etching that they describe it, as Philip Gilbert Hamerton did in 1914, as a representation of a demon who has always already been there:

> [His] stony eyes have watched through the long centuries the changes on its banks. The face wears an expression of quiet and contented observation; from the Middle Ages, when this demon first looked from his lofty post, there has been sin enough in the great city to afford him uninterrupted satisfaction. He saw the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and felt warm gladness in his heart of stone whilst the chants of thanksgiving rose musically in the choir below; nor was he less inwardly gratified when the slow processions of carts took the nobles to the guillotine and the chanting priests were silenced. Those uncouth ears have heard the roar and tumult of revolution. . . . Nor have public crimes or public miseries been the demon's only consolation. Night after night he hears

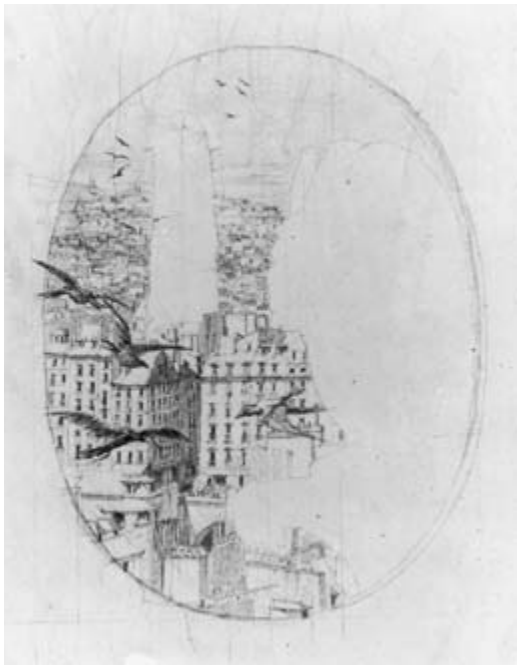
> the low splash when the suicide leaps into the water, and a steady continuous murmur of long lamentation and blasphemy.[12]

This fantasy of the creature's eternal presence is exactly what Méryon wanted to evoke in his image, resituating its gaze not just within the sinful city but against the accumulated horrors of its layered past.

The artist made two surviving preliminary drawings in soft graphite pencil which seem to articulate this rift between the modern and the medieval city. The first shows only the demon, the first and most important object of his attention, leaning on the parapet with the tower of Saint-Jacques in the background (fig. 202). It is as if the Gothic and only the Gothic has seeped out of the city's infrastructure to make everything else seem pale by comparison. Already Méryon is changing things, making the demon's muscles more rounded and enlarging its hideously protruding tongue. Here the artist is also interested in the tower in the background, which, unlike the stone gargoyle, had stood over Paris since the fifteenth century and had been threatened with destruction before its restoration. In this sense Méryon was presenting a ghostly trace of a Parisian monument as it once was, before it had been covered in scaffolding and restored. Méryon compressed the distance between two objects that are in fact much farther apart. The tower is also drastically enlarged in size, as can be seen if one re-creates the artist's vantage point today. Its looming presence, with three of its projecting gargoyles and its own stone chimeras clearly visible, is pressed up against the sharp modernity of the vampire. In Richard Maxwell's words, "nineteenth century Gothic meets medieval Gothic. The two possibilities are weighed within the one view."[13]

The second drawing is a study of the in-between—the birds that, circling toward us, connect the distant tower to the foreground promontory and the densely packed buildings (fig. 203). These birds are part of the standard repertoire of the nineteenth-century Gothic. The etcher was fond of the American writer Edgar Allan Poe, whose poem *The Raven* he knew well from Baudelaire's translation and from conversations with the French poet. When, looking at another etching with a similar group of birds, Baudelaire pointed out that it was implausible for so many eagles to be found

202. Charles Méryon, study for *Le Stryge:* the chimera and the Tour Saint-Jacques. Pencil, 199 × 150 mm. Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts.



203. Charles Méryon, study for *Le Stryge:* the city and the birds. Pencil, 198 × 150 mm. Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts.

in the Parisian sky, the artist replied in one of his paranoid fantasies that such birds were often released by agents of the emperor "to study the presages according to the rites."[14]

Hamerton, another nineteenth-century commentator, saw the birds as personal augurs of Méryon's future madness: "Four ravens are flying about him in the free air, like the dark and morbid thoughts that visit a lofty but too much isolated mind; and thus, as we know, has Méryon been himself assailed." Whether these birds are crows, ravens, or eagles, signs of dementia or of imperial surveillance, those in the foreground of this image break the oval frame to swoop into our space, adding to the dizzying vertigo of the vision.[15]

Méryon later described how he had utilized a "chambre claire" to make this work.[16] This was a small prism attached to a stand, known as a camera lucida, which produced a faint image on the paper and aided the artist in fixing complex architectural views. The use of this mechanical device accounts for the carefully measured repetition of vertical lines in these two drawings as well as the curvilinear shape that frames them. This shape has nothing Gothic about it but rather suggests the penetrative focal point, the focus of an optical modernity, containing vast miles within a tiny lenslike oval simulacrum only 155 millimetres long by 116 millimeters wide. Méryon then copied his second drawing of the setting in reverse, or possibly counterproofed it, directly onto the metal plate, which was then etched to make the first state proper. This was only a trial stage, since only two impressions were made. Whereas in recording, that is, in drawing the image, Méryon had begun with the monster and then made its setting, here the process was reversed: in producing the etching he first established the physical locus into which his demon could be born. Using the first drawing, Méryon now added to the plate all the Gothic elements at once—chimera, balustrade, and tower—to produce the second state, known only in a unique impression, uniting for the first time the pensive demon with the object of his gaze (fig. 204).

Méryon felt an intense sense of propriety over this image. Typical of him but not of other etchers, he printed it himself. His scrupulous attention to effects of ink wiping and paper texture can be seen in the soft, atmospheric quality of early impressions, which are on greenish paper. This subtle character later disappears in the darker, crisper lines of impressions printed by A. Delâtre in 1861. His control over the etching manifested an anxiety about artisanal handcraft in an age of mechanical reproduction and about copyright especially relevant to the easily poached print medium. Méryon's fears were well founded, since one of his own lesser-known lithographs of another chimera from Notre-Dame was later copied and his poem about it plagiarized by Antoine Monnier in his *Eaux-fortes et rêves creux* in 1873.[17] As if to emphasize the image as *his*, the fourth and fifth states are signed no fewer than three

204. Charles Méryon, *Le Stryge*. Etching with drypoint, brown ink on greenish paper, unique second state before any inscriptions, 169 × 133 mm. Fogg Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. (Courtesy of the Fogg Museum, Harvard University, Art Museums, Bequest of Joseph B. Marvin.)

times (fig. 197): the initials "CM" appear in the lower left foreground wall within the image; once more after the two verses inscribed below it; and then at the bottom left of the frame appears his signature, "C. Meryon del. sculp.—MDCCCLIII" (date reversed). The poetic couplet written below in pseudo-Gothic letters also indicates his need not only to represent something but to possess it by interpretation:

> Insatiable vampire l'éternelle Luxure
> Sur la Grande Cité convoite sa pâture.
>
> [Insatiable vampire, Eternal Lust
> Over the great city desiring its food.]

According to two letters that Méryon sent his father in the spring of 1854, these two verses had been the subject of some embarrassing complications. In the first letter he apologized: "I am continuing my views of Paris, I have made two new ones, one of which is included in this letter. I know that there is a foot too much in the first line, but I left it for the first hundred impressions."[18] Shortly after, on 17 April 1854, he explained the genesis of the etching in another letter to his father:

> With regard to my etching of the *vigie Notre-Dame* I shall reply to you that this view is taken from above the upper part of the gallery of the same roof, of which I must previously have sent you a proof. This monster that I have represented in it does exist, and is in no manner a work of imagination. I believed I saw in this figure the personification of Luxuria [*de la luseure*]; it was by this thought that I was inspired to compose the two lines of verse that are at the bottom of the print, lines in which I neglected to count the syllables, being ignorant at the time of the first rules of versification. At the time the first proofs were issued, several persons showed me my mistake, but I deliberately let it remain on the first hundred so it could serve as an indication of the printing and also to attest to my ignorance of the art of poetry. I have now effaced the motto in order to replace it shortly with this version, which preserves perfectly the sense of my thought.
>
> Vampire insatiable, éternelle Luxure
> Sur la grande cité, *tu guettes ta* pâture.
>
> [Insatiable vampire, Eternal Lust
> Over the great city you watch for your food.][19]

There are, however, no prints extant with this couplet replacing the verb *convoiter*, "to desire," with the verb *guetter*, "to watch out for," and subsequent impressions have no verses at all (fig. 205). This suggests that Méryon never replaced the verses but decided to omit them altogether. Only a handful of the one hundred impressions of the fourth state survive.

It is worth thinking about the verses that the artist composed, both with and without their extra syllable. Méryon's naming the vampire *Luxuria*, or Lust, is typical of his medievalizing habit of mind. One of the seven deadly sins in the traditional formulation going back to Gregory the Great, this was the preeminently sexual sin, represented by artists as entirely human and almost always as female. In the twelfth century she was carved as a woman whose breasts were gnawed by snakes and whose genitals were grasped by toads, and at Notre-Dame at the beginning of the thirteenth she was a woman looking in a mirror.[20] Méryon's interest in Paris as a city of sin can be seen in another poem in the *Eaux-fortes* series addressing his fellow city dwellers: "Oh! Passers, passers, pray for all that ceaseless stream of sinners which is constantly being brought to Death's greedy clutches by this City of Pleasure in this famous world."[21] "La grande cité de volupté," as Méryon repeatedly characterized his native city, was estimated to have had thirty-four thousand prostitutes in the 1850s.[22] His idea that the demon is literally licking its lips in anticipation of the feast of flesh it sees before its eyes makes it more than an image of sexual desire but one in which the

205. Charles Méryon, *Le Stryge*. Etching with drypoint, sixth state, with two lines of verse removed, 169 × 130 mm.

206. Charles Meryon, Le Stryge: Etching with Dry Point on ivory laid paper. Ninth State with "1" to the left of "CM" to denote its intended order in the series of Eux-Fortes sur Paris, 1861 169 x 130 mm. Art Institute of Chicago.

viewer projects an individual subjectivity and asks, What is this creature looking at? This would become a major trope through which subsequent audiences understood this and the other chimeras for the next hundred and fifty years. Méryon's etching was not only the first reproduction of the melancholy demon; it stimulated the projections and identification with the stone stare, asking, What does the demon see? It was Méryon's genius to want to see through the gargoyle's gaze.

In the eighth and ninth states Méryon gave his etching a new title inscribed in capitals—***LE STRYGE*** (fig. 206).[23] What did this new name mean? It certainly had a more complex range of associations than the term "vampire," which is how it is often translated. In responding to the first published article on his work by Philippe Burty, Méryon wrote, "I had at first named this piece *La Vigie* [the lookout], but I think its present name of *Le Stryge* suits it still better."[24] Méryon, having been a sailor, has often been discussed as associating the gargoyle with a ship's sentinel in the crow's nest or the figurehead. Later, in another image, Méryon portrayed the very emblem of Paris, which is a ship.[25] Figureheads on ships are usually female, but Méryon changed the female title of *La Vigie* to the masculine *Le Stryge*. This time the artist was not making a grammatical error but a conscious choice. Not a straightforward demon or devil, like the "little black devil" (noir diablotin) who floats above the gates of the

Palais de Justice in another print, the chimera becomes, like so many of Méryon's aerial fantasies, female.[26] In one dictionary "*Strige, Stryge*" is listed as a feminine noun, which is described in the main entry as "a fabulous monster of Greek myth with the head of a woman, the body of a bird, and the claws of a bird of prey which sucks the blood of newborns and young childern." It has a strong gender association, according to another dictionary, being a "bird of the night, a sort of vampire," and the term was used in fifth-century Salic law to refer to prostitutes.[27]

Popular demonological sources that Méryon would have known include Collin de Plancy's *Dictionnaire infernal*, first published in 1818, which also associated the word with "free women," "old women," and, most significantly, prostitutes. Another influential nineteenth-century study of demons was Ferdinand Denis's *Le Monde enchanté: Cosmographie et histoire naturelle fantastiques du Moyen Âge*, published in Paris in 1843. This describes the frightening creatures, "lamias" and "stryges," coming from Jewish or Greek root terms.[28] Most influential of all, however, was Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris*. One of Esmeralda's torturers in her trial for witchcraft asks, "Young Bohemian girl, you confess to having taken part in agapes, sabbaths, and infernal malefices, together with larvae, masks and vampires [*les stryges*]? Answer!"[29] In the 1877 "new illustrated edition" of Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris,* in the table of plates, Méryon's masterpiece is presented in the feminine *La Stryge*. It is important that soon this name stuck not just to the image Méryon produced but to the original stone gargoyle itself. It is called *La Stryge* in a 1980 exhibition catalogue essay by Léon Pressouyre.[30] This process of feminization can be seen on the visual level in the differences between the statue and the etching. Méryon softens the mouth and makes the tongue even larger than in the original, as well as emphasizing the long, graceful fingers and nails of the hands that come up to cup the deeply cut cheeks.

If the Stryge's sex is made ambiguous in the print, it is in part because of the conflicted nature of Méryon's own sexual fantasies. Between first creating his vampire and its ambiguous renaming as *Le Stryge* he was committed to the asylum at Charenton. Méryon's mental state in this period was described by the artist's closest friend, Antoine-Édouard Foley, who had been a naval officer with him but turned physician and settled in Nantes. Foley's testimony clearly suggests that a number of sexual problems lay at the source of Méryon's worsening condition. A letter from Foley to Méryon's father on 25 December 1855, intended to apprise the old doctor of his son's deterioration, described the artist's feeling of persecution. Méryon believed that his friends thought him guilty "of a vice that one encounters unfortunately among sailors but which is more frequent in far-off countries."[31] The subject of sex between men appears again in a letter Méryon wrote to his friend on 23 July 1857: "Among the majority of these people we will notice, perhaps, the presence of the vice of

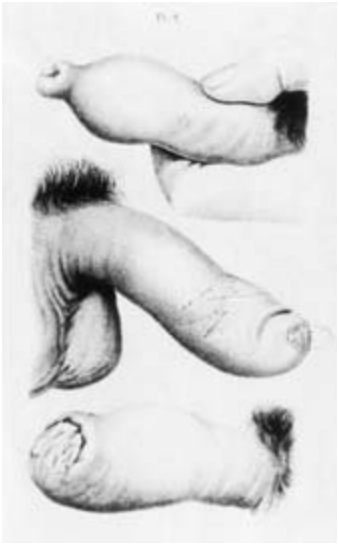
sodomy, which arises from vicious principles inherent in the blood, the influence of a torrid climate, a poor diet, the lack of space, or, finally, because of the natural indolence of individuals. Far be it from me now to think that one should not strive by all means possible to seek to correct this odious and repulsive vice (as much the act as its deplorable results) in all those who are afflicted with it and especially to extirpate it in its causes."[32] It would be too easy to see such outbursts as latent self-recrimination, but whether they refer to personal experience or not, they help flesh out the artist's fear of and fascination with specific forms of male lust and give the Stryge's desire more specificity.

A visual allusion to what Méryon called "this odious and repulsive vice" also appears in the dense urban landscape of the Right Bank in the etching. Philippe Junod noticed that the large domed roof of one of the popular sites of visual spectacle in Paris, the Panorama, appears in the distant background even though the building had been demolished and was no longer visible on the horizon when Méryon made his drawing. He attributes the inclusion of this landmark to the fact that Méryon was born near the Panorama and that the artist sought to include this new form of mass delusion as part of his own phantasmal spectacle of modern vice.[33] But another set of associations may have lurked in Méryon's mind that would explain the inclusion of the ghost of Parisian entertainment. In 1862 Louis Canler, the chief of police, published his *Mémoires*, in which he identified the vice districts in the city. Among the male prostitutes in Paris he cites the *persilleuses*, or effeminate types, as "walking two by two" in the passage des Panoramas.[34] The demon gazes upon sites associated with certain types of vice for his audience as well as for himself. As Joan Copjec has argued, the uncanniness of the vampire results from the fact that "rather than making us more at home in our bodies conceived as the agents of our intelligence, the makers of sense, vampirism presents us with a body-double that we can neither make sense of nor recognize as our own."[35]

Part of what makes this such a highly charged sexual image is that the feminized vampire simultaneously hides and displays an erect phallus. Méryon's vantage point emphasizes the single stone crocket that is the curled corner projection of the parapet below the creature, which sticks up and spurts onto the city below exactly where its genitals should be. In the nineteenth century, unlike in the Middle Ages, the erection could only be alluded to in the guise of something else, never represented for what it was. However, Méryon might have had more personal reasons for linking the demon's insatiable sexual appetite with this decorative Gothic flower. Foley's letters refer to how Méryon was inflamed by his sexual organ, which Foley felt contributed to ruining his friend's sanity.[36] In 1861, the year that he gave his creation the new and even more ambiguously sexual title *Le Stryge*, a very different set of "dessins d'après

nature" were published in M. A. Cullerier's *Précis iconographique des maladies vénériennes*. These illustrated the decay not of old stones under the ravages of time but of human flesh under the ravages of venereal disease. Plate 2 shows three penises with the same swelling or "gonflement de la verge" caused by gonorrhea, which we know the artist had contracted (fig. 207).[37] The organs' luxuriant engorged tips curl and turn in on themselves like the petals of a flower and like the crocket on the corner of Notre-Dame, the vampire's swollen stone "verge" in Méryon's etching.

The morbid sexuality that fueled Méryon's image making at this time, according to his friend Foley, involved the scourge of sexually transmitted disease. The artist fell in love with the thirteen-year-old daughter of the proprietor of the restaurant where he took his meals, a girl called Louise Neveu. She is described as "a veritable model of all the horrible sores that the scrofulous vice can inflict on a single individual. The body of this unfortunate woman-girl was, in some way, a great ulcer; the eyes, the nose, the mouth—the only parts of her body that it was impossible to cover—were not exempt from the overall scourge. Continual suffering had made this child cantakerous and sullen. . . . She does not love Méryon. She considered him a fool and was afraid of him."[38] Louise was probably suffering from congenital syphilis. Like the illegitimate Méryon, she bore the sins of the previous generation, even more markedly as a stain. The "insatiable vampire" had literally eaten at her flesh. Méryon's desire sought objects as repulsive as the chimeras of the cathedral, and what all this tragic evidence suggests is that the affliction haunting Méryon's etching and embodied in the vampire's appetite is not a mental one—the madness upon which so many previous discussions of the artist have focused—but a sexually transmitted disease.



207. M. Léveillé, phimosis of the penis. From M. A. Cullerier, *Précis iconographique des maladies vénériennes*, 1866.

Méryon's attitude to his etching changed over time, as suggested by Jules Andrieu's account of a visit to his studio in 1861–62:

> Taking up the etching, which did not then bear the name of *The Stryge*, Méryon said to me, "You can't tell why my comrades, who know their work better than I do, fail with the Tower of St. Jacques? It is because the modern square is the principle thing for them, and the Middle Age tower an accident. But if they saw, as I see, an enemy behind each battlement and arms through each loophole; if they expected, as I do, to have the boiling oil and the molten lead poured down on them, they would do far finer things than I can do. For often I have to patch my plate so much that I ought indeed to be a tinker. My comrades," added he—striking *the Stryge*—"my comrades are sensible fellows. They are never haunted by this monster." "What monster?" I asked, and, seeing a reproachful look, I corrected myself; "or, rather, what does this monster mean?" "The monster is mine and that of the men who built this Tower of St. Jacques. He means

stupidity, cruelty, lust, hypocrisy,—they have all met in that one beast."[39]

In taking possession of the demon and renaming it, Méryon transformed it into a monster of the mind. It no longer represents the flamboyantly wicked Mephistopheles of an earlier romantic generation but, as *Le Stryge*, becomes something far more modern: an incarnation of the melancholic vision of Baudelaire's poetry of urban alienation, the Satan of spleen.[40] In his "Salon of 1859," where he eulogized Méryon's vision of Paris, Baudelaire referred to a demon that was also an illness. "I have rarely seen the natural solemnity of an immense city more poetically reproduced. Those majestic accumulations of stone; those spires 'whose fingers point to heaven': those obelisks of industry, spewing forth their conglomerations of smoke against the firmament; those prodigies of scaffolding round buildings under repair . . . he forgot not one of the complex elements which go to make up the painful and glorious décor of civilization. . . . But a cruel demon has touched M. Meryon's brain. . . . And from that moment we have never ceased waiting anxiously for some consoling news of this singular naval officer . . . who bade farewell to the ocean's solemn adventures in order to paint the gloomy majesty of this most disquieting of capitals."[41] On 4 March 1860 Baudelaire wrote excitedly to his mother, having bought no fewer than three sets of Méryon's Paris series at considerable expense. Here he listed this first print in terms of the confrontation between the monster and the medieval building, between the mind and the object of its contemplation: "I: Le monstre dans le fond, la tour Saint-Jacques de la Boucherie." The poet also described how it was wrong to say that the views of Paris in Méryon's album were of *vieux Paris*, but that they were instead "poetic views of Paris," since they were produced in the face of "immense demolitions and repairs ordered by the emperor," noting that in some images one can even see "buildings covered in scaffolding."[42] Writing about the strange and grandiose projects for Paris during the tyranny of Haussmann, Victor Fournel described how one architect "proposed to reconstruct the entire historic city center in Gothic style, so as to bring it into harmony with Notre-Dame."[43] In a sense both Méryon's twenty-five plates for the *Eaux-fortes sur Paris* and Baudelaire's "tableaux parisiens" attempted exactly this—to view the streets as though they constituted the nave of some immense, decaying cathedral. When seen as the first plate in the 1861 series *Eaux-fortes sur Paris*, which celebrates the city in the very process of its erasure, the Stryge's lust thus becomes a symbol of modernity's hunger for destruction. *Le Stryge* presides as the spirit over the whole series with an uncanny sense of foreboding for a city on the verge of destruction, a city of death.

Méryon's mythmaking does not make him nostalgic for the Middle Ages, like so many of his artist-contemporaries. He shared, in fact, some of the progressive

rationalist ideals of Viollet-le-Duc. Through his friend Foley, who had been a close associate of the social thinker Auguste Comte, the artist had been drawn to some of the more utopian political trends of the period. Years later, in 1879, Foley was to publish a strange, rambling book, *The Nineteenth Century and Its Emblems Consisting of Nightmares, Dreams, Reveries, Meditations, Clarifications, Theories and Positivist-Socialist Advice*, which reveals the same mixture of the diabolical and political.[44] The excesses of revolutions, wars, and, significantly, Roman Catholicism are seen as the greatest ills "in the great drama of civilization" culminating in the Commune.[45] Even more relevant for understanding the milieu in which Méryon's visual politics was formed is the fact that a major character in the book is Lucifer. Brooding impatiently over the nineteenth century, he is presented as the agent or angel of revolution and destruction, vice and fragmentation, just as the vampire of modern vice haunts Méryon's Paris. Foley's anti-intellectual diatribe ends with the idea that "an excess of abstraction might take Lucifer to Charenton," the very asylum where Méryon had ended his days.

Foley wrote his pretentious apocalyptic musings in retirement, from the safety of his easy chair. Méryon's vantage point was, by contrast, always more precarious. He was always perched on the edge of the precipice. One of the most perceptive contemporary descriptions of Méryon's etching which realizes this inherent danger occurs in Baudelaire's letter to his mother, which ironically elides the artist and his "cruel demon" in a colloquial but nonetheless ominously ironic phrase: "The hideous and colossal figure in the frontispiece is one of the figures decorating the exterior of Notre-Dame. In the background is Paris, viewed from a height. How the devil this man manages to work so calmly over an abyss I do not know."[46] How the devil indeed!

II · *The Self and the Squatting Ape*

Those who have sought to see in *Le Stryge* a psychological self-portrait of the artist forget that the monster is always both within and without, part of oneself and yet at the same time quite other. In fact, Méryon identifed more directly with another of the cathedral's stone chimeras. The single lithograph in Méryon's oeuvre, dated, like *Le Stryge*, 1853, also took as its subject one of the newly carved statues designed by Viollet-le-Duc—the ape that squats on the southeast corner of the southern tower (no. 31; fig. 208). Méryon framed the creature at the left against the crumbling vertical pilaster and made the darkest part of the figure its curved and bumpy back. He did not copy the statue's jointed simian feet as they grip the edge of the parapet, but was more concerned with presenting its mass (fig. 209). In this print, in contrast to *Le*

208. Charles Méryon, *Le Singe de Notre-Dame*, 1853. Lithograph. BNF.

209. Séraphin-Médéric Mieusement, the squatting monkey (no. 31), Notre-Dame, Paris, 1892. MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

Stryge, the crockets that jut out at the corners evoke not phalli, but monkeylike faces, aping the ape's own ability to mimic. Worked on a soft, porous lithographic stone, this print is also far more spontaneous. The fluid title "Sur une Chimère de Notre Dame de Paris" floats above his own lines of verse. Like the Stryge this "chimère" is contemplative—a watcher, attentive to the goings-on of the world below. It is an image that invites the question, What is it that attracts its intense gaze?

> Tell me, fantastic shade, by whom mankind is aped,
> Material demon, burden of eras past,
> What are you contemplating thus, unsightly freak,
> In the great gulf on which your eyes are cast?
> Is it of witches' sabbaths that you dream? Do you attend,
> So as to howl, a sorceress' kiss on your eroded pate?
> How was your leering visage petrified . . .
> Did Satan so decree or did God arbitrate?

210. J.-J. Grandville, monkey-artist. Frontispiece from *Scènes de la vie privée et publique des animaux* (Paris: J. Hetzel, 1842).

And when, beside you, starting at alarms,
Esmeralda's skittish goat passed by,
You were not moved to clasp it in your arms.
Of those drowned in the Seine, do you serve as Hell's gauge?
Or are you but the erstwhile dreaded mask,
The curious scarecrow of a distant age?[47]

Although described as a vestige of "a distant age," this ape has a far more modern and deeply personal range of meanings for Méryon. First, the animal was a traditional sign for the artist's struggle to mimic reality, a constant preoccupation for this artist who worked on a minute scale.[48] In Grandville's *Singeries morales, politiques*, a series of six vignettes published in 1832 in *La Caricature*, monkeys play at being painters, draftsmen, and sculptors, and in the frontispiece to his celebrated *Scènes de la vie privée et publique des animaux* (1842) the painter, brush in hand, has a tail and turns away in lost profile just like the simian in Méryon's print (fig. 210). As well as articulating the vanity of artistic creation, apes and monkeys had recently developed those controversial connotations already discussed in chapter 4, linked to the creation of humanity itself. The figure drawn by Méryon has the features of an orangutan, and it was this species in particular that the naturalist Frédéric Gérard had described as the "predecessors of man on the earth."[49] For Méryon the ape's ancestral position, a direct link in the chain of human lineage, would have also fed anxieties not only about his capacities as a creative artist, but also about his own illegitimacy as a member of the Méryon family. But the strongest association for Méryon, evident in his description of the sorceress's kiss and the animal's arousal by the goat in Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris*, was that it represented the hidden beast of lust that lurked within modern man. More evidence for Méryon's self-identification with the ape's sexual nature is provided by Baudelaire, who describes a visit from the artist in 1860:

He asked me if I had read the stories of a certain Edgar Poe. I replied that I knew them better than anyone else, and for a good reason. Then he asked me very emphatically whether I believed in the reality of this Edgar Poe. I, in turn, naturally asked him to whom he attributed all his stories. He told me: "To an Organization of writers who were very clever, very powerful and well informed about everything." And this is one of his reasons. "*La Rue Morgue*. I did a design of the *Morgue*. An *Orang-outang*. I have often been compared to an ape. That ape assassinated two women, a mother and her daughter. I, too, have morally assassinated two women, a mother and her daughter. I have always taken the story as an allusion to my misfortunes. I should be very pleased if you could discover for me the date when Edgar Poe (always supposing he had no help

211. Emmanuel Fremiet, gorilla abducting a negress. Bronze. Nantes, Museum.

from anyone) wrote that story, to see if that date coincides with my experiences."[50]

These fantasies referred to his desire for the disfigured Louise Neveu, who had refused his offer of marriage.[51] They are also a result of his having read Baudelaire's translation of Poe's story "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," published in 1856, in which an orangutan is the monstrous dismemberer of Parisian women.

The link between apes, Baudelaire, and Méryon goes deeper still. The year before their conversation, the artist had read Baudelaire's "Salon of 1859" with great interest because it had included a long, laudatory discussion of his Paris etchings as well as the famous sentence describing his illness: "But a cruel demon has touched M. Meryon's brain."[52] There Baudelaire had also described another image of a woman being sexually attacked by an ape, which had been rejected by the Salon jury, Emmanuel Fremiet's life-size *Orang-outang entrainant une femme au fond des bois*. Fremiet's shockingly naturalistic works must have been known to Méryon and only added to his self-loathing (fig. 211). Méryon's earlier lithograph and his appended verses present a very different image of the ape and describe the beast's erotic relation to women in more passive terms.[53] One of the least violent and terrifying of all the chimeras on the balustrade, the squatting ape seems quiet and attentive rather than monstrous and menacing. With its knees pressed tight up against its chest it recalls other images of romantic contemplation circulating in Paris in this period. This pose became even

212. Jean-Hippolyte Flandrin, study of a nude male figure. Oil on canvas, 98 × 124 mm. Paris, Louvre.

213. Félix Bracquemond, portrait of Charles Méryon with verses added by Méryon, 1854. BNF.

more well known the year after Méryon made his print through Jean-Hippolyte Flandrin's painting *Jeune Homme nu sur un rocher*, shown at the Salon of 1854, which was later to became one of modernity's key icons of abject, homoerotic desire (fig. 212).[54] For Méryon, however, the pose represented not desire but denial, not the subject's inner thought but its impotence. In contrast to this depiction of classically eroticized male beauty, Méryon saw himself squatting in medieval ugliness, what he calls a "scarecrow"—a scary, empty shell around which black birds are circling.

Méryon made this relentlessly negative self-imaging part of his framing of the *Eaux-fortes sur Paris*. The second plate in the series following *Le Stryge* is an etched portrait of the artist by Félix Bracquemond (fig. 213). Méryon had added his usual verses to the plate before signing his name and adding the date 1854: "Messire Bracquemond / A peint en cette image / Le sombre Méryon / Au grotesque visage" (Messire Bracquemond / Has painted in this image / The somber Méryon / With a grotesque face).[55] In a letter about this print to Bracquemond Méryon elaborated further on the "monstruosité" of his own "grotesque face."[56] Its blunt, snub nose and squashed features, represented as though carved in stone, recall the similarly left-looking stone features of the Stryge of the previous plate. But it is much closer to the darker visage of the ape that he drew onto the soft stone of his only lithograph.

Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok describe the psychic process of incorporation using a series of powerful sculptural and building metaphors that may help us understand Méryon's relationship to the statues that he saw on the cathedral: "Melancholics cherish the memory as their most precious possession, even though it must be concealed by a crypt built with the bricks of hate and aggression. It should be remarked that as long as the crypt holds, there is no melancholia. It erupts when the walls are shaken, often as the result of the loss of some secondary love-object who had buttressed them. Faced with the danger of seeing the crypt crumble, the whole of the ego becomes one with the crypt, showing the concealed object of love in its own guise. . . . Melancholics seem to inflict pain on themselves, but in fact they lend their own flesh to their phantom object of love."[57] In both his *Le Stryge* and his chimera lithograph the artist "lent his own flesh" to sculptures which he then was able to incorporate. They became representations of two possible responses to traumatic loss that Freud would later describe in his essay "Mourning and Melancholia." Mourning makes it possible to continue "by declaring the object to be dead and offering the ego the inducement of continuing to live."[58] Melancholy, by contrast, by turning feelings of resentment and dissolution on oneself, makes going on impossible. The Stryge, whom I have often referred to as the melancholy demon, is in fact better understood in the post-Baudelairean phase of his existence as a figure of mourning. His calm gaze upon the city of death, which the poet so admired, provides a sense of continu-

ity. Méryon's ape chimera, on the other hand, is profoundly melancholy. A "material demon," in Méryon's words, oppressed by the burden of the past, its simian form represents the incapacity to do anything but repeat it, and its position on the edge represents less a buttress against the abyss than a place from which to jump into that nothingness.

III · *The Suicidal Stare*

Walter Benjamin described how for Baudelaire suicide represented "the quintessence of modernity."[59] Méryon was also fascinated by the subject, as is evident from the line of his poem on the chimera: "Of those drowned in the Seine, do you serve as Hell's gauge?" Another of his *Eaux-fortes sur Paris*, *La Morgue*, showed the corpse of a suicide being recovered from the river before a jeering crowd and being carried to the nearby mortuary.[60] Notre-Dame was in fact a favorite spot for those wanting to end it all. Long before its restoration, a young painter-pupil of Jacques-Louis David's was "a romantic before his time," in the words of Richard Cobb, since he chose to throw himself from one of the towers.[61] Even as gargoyles were being positioned on the high towers, desperate people were hurling themselves to their deaths from among them. On 23 January 1853 the *Journal des travaux* announced that "today at two o'clock a man threw himself from the top of the south tower. In falling his body was cut in two and the lower part fell in the chantier close to the builder's office." While carvers were creating stone horrors from the combined limbs of fragmented human and animals, actual bloody body parts were raining down upon them. The American printmaker Joseph Pennell recalled the old guardian of the towers telling him "stories of the suicides till the wire nets were put up around the balcony around the towers; of the man who threw himself over and repented as he fell and grabbed a gargoyle, slowly slipping till his last finger gave way; of the woman who rushed up and jumped over and was caught by her skirts, which tore as she struggled; and how they would all rush out of the door of the stairs and hurl themselves over when he was not looking."[62]

Twenty-four suicides are recorded as having jumped from the cathedral. These were either from the south tower, sixty-nine meters above the parvis, or from the forty-six meters of the balustrade, under the watchful eyes of the Stryge.[63] This was from where the last suicide jumped in 1986, also killing an innocent bystander below. Partly in response to this double tragedy, at the end of 1990 the Commission supérieure des monuments historiques approved an "antisuicide device" for the balustrade level, a heavy wire mesh fence, which was installed to prevent people from jumping over the edge.[64] Tourists today can see those chimeras on the western face of

214. The Stryge, schoolgirls, and the antisuicide fence erected after 1990. (Photo: Stuart Michaels.)

the balustrade (nos. 6–21) only as they cross from the steps in the north tower leading up to the balustrade and go across to the south tower to make their final ascent. The new barrier has reduced the visual power of the chimeras and quite transformed their effect. Visitors no longer enjoy the intimate relationship that Méryon once had with these statues; the fence restrains us behind bars as though *we* were the wild animals, the ravenous, mad ones, clawing to get out of the cathedral's cage, meanwhile seeming to leave the hideous monsters free to strut against the sky and enjoy the view unrestricted by metal mesh (fig. 214). The demon, although the very emblem of ennui, never of course takes the plunge. He just watches while others do it, and anyway, unlike us, he has wings.

J. Tissot's *De la manie du suicide et de l'esprit de révolte: De leurs causes et leurs remèdes* (1840) argued that the rising number of suicides in Paris was due to the "instability of political circumstances" but also could be attributed to the rise of those "subversive passions" evoked by Méryon's etching, which he lists as "intemperance, debauchery, laziness, lust, ambition, and pride" (intempérance, la débauche, la paresse, le luxe, l'ambition et l'orgueil).[65] This sounds like a slightly modified account of the seven deadly sins that were carved on the west front just after the year 1200. Six hundred and fifty years later the sins of French society were much the same; only their signs had changed. Brière de Boismont in "De l'influence de la civilization sur le suicide," in *Annales d'Hygiène* (1855), described how "one of the strongest influ-

ences we have observed is the modern melancholy, which no longer has faith, gazes complacently into a dangerous void, and prides itself on a total incapacity for action. Next come the democratic idea, that is to say, the general belief that everything is easily attainable, and the cruel disappointments consequent upon it . . . the disasters inseparable from unbridled competition, the frantic excitements of luxury . . . the weakening of religious sentiment, the prevalence of doubt and materialist ideas, and the political upheavals with their ensuing ruins."[66] The "modern melancholy [that] gazes complacently into the dangerous void" seems a perfect description of Méryon's *Le Stryge*. It was a gaze that the artist shared with the poet Gérard de Nerval, who created his own series of poems, titled *Les Chimères*, the very same year. In de Nerval's *Aurélia*, also written in 1853, the troubled poet provides another link between madness and pseudomedieval image making. This is in a description of one of the outside walls of the exercise yard of the clinic of Émile Blanche at Passy, where de Nerval was detained during his last breakdown. This wall was covered with a very early instance of drawings, a kind of informal site of the type that psychologists would call "art of the insane" and that would later be called "l'Art Brut": "Various drawings in profile, one of them suggested a Japanese idol. Farther on a death's head had been gouged into the plaster; facing this were two blocks of sandstone which had been sculpted into rather well-rendered little gargoyles by one of the garden's regulars."[67] Only two years later, on 15 February 1855, de Nerval hanged himself in one of the dark, winding, medieval streets of Paris that, like Méryon, he loved so much.

When Baudelaire published his *Spleen de Paris* in 1861 he described Méryon's *Eaux-fortes sur Paris* as one of the works that had most inspired him. Describing how modernity arose from "the exploration of enormous cities and from the convergence of their innumerable connections," he was, like the etcher, making older myths resonate in the modern metropolis. One such connection—between Méryon's clinging monster and Victor Hugo's famous phrase "There is no man who does not have his chimera"—might have suggested the nightmarish vision that Baudelaire developed in one of the most haunting prose poems in this collection, "To Every Man His Chimera." No longer the weight of the flesh oppressing the spirit, the chimera becomes a psychic monster of endless inner indecipherability.[68]

> Under a vast grey sky, in an endless dustbowl with no sign of a path or a blade of grass or a thistle or a nettle anywhere, I came across some who were all walking along with their heads bent down towards the ground. Every one of them carried a huge Chimera on his back, as heavy as a sack of flour, of coal, or a Roman soldier's pack. But the monstrous beasts they carried were not merely an inert mass, far from it: they were hugging and throttling their man in the grasp of their powerful elastic muscles, clinging with

their huge claws on the man's chest, their fantastic heads rising above the man's face like one of those hideous helmets which warriors wore in the olden days, to strike more terror into the enemy. I questioned one of these men, asking where they were bound for. He replied that he had no idea, any more than the rest of them, but obviously they must be going somewhere, as they were compelled by some irresistible desire to plod on and on. A curious point, worth noting, is that not one of the pilgrims seemed at all irritated by the ferocious creature dangling from his neck and clinging to his back; they all seemed to regard their monster as being part of their own body.[69]

Unlike most of us, Charles Méryon was not oblivious to but totally obsessed by his chimera, especially after he encountered it "in the flesh," as it were, among the statues of Notre-Dame in 1853. He spent the next fifteen years trying to extrude it, to control it through representation. No artist ever looked harder at the stone demon carved on the balustrade than Charles Méryon, and no artist was able to transform Viollet-le-Duc's image into something so profoundly personal. He had proclaimed, "The monster is mine," and in every incision and wound he inflicted on the etched plate, he was carving his own crypt. The artist spent his last months in the asylum as mute and unresponsive as a statue, sitting upright and staring into space.[70] Ever watchful, he refused to lie down for fear of not waking. At night he hoisted himself upright without undressing, holding himself against the wall between two planks, attached by ropes—terrified of the horizontality of death and unable to close his eyes. Refusing all food, he finally expired on 14 February 1868. His friend and biographer Burty was surely thinking of the artist's most famous creation, *Le Stryge*, when he described Méryon's corpse lying in its coffin, still attentive, still clinging to verticality, finally merging to become one with his monster: "His brown eyes were still wide open and seemed to be anxiously and eagerly scanning the horizon for some invisible object."

7. Monsters of Light

THE GARGOYLES OF PHOTOGRAPHERS

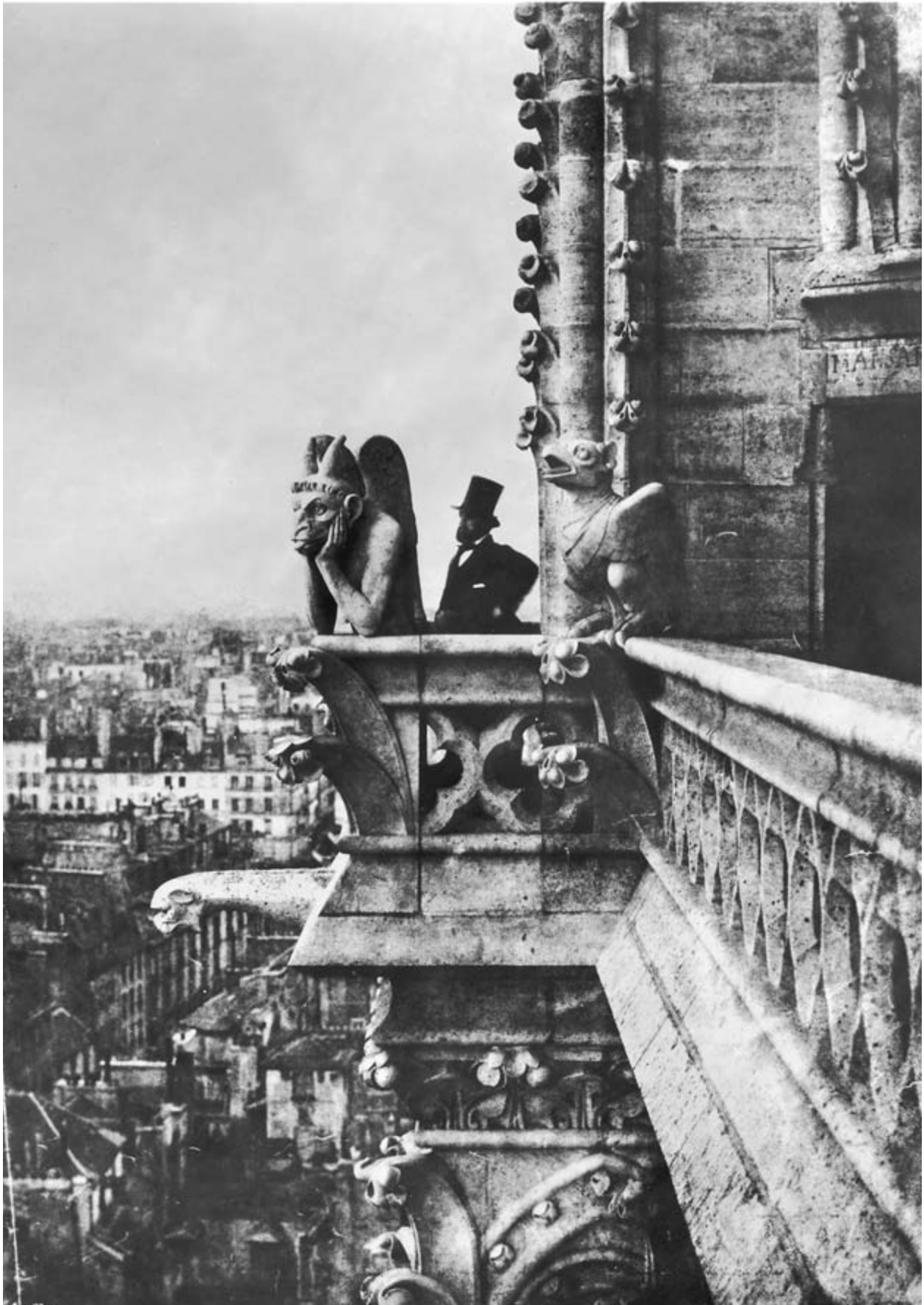
Photography has the advantage of making possible an exact and irrefutable presentation of a building in any given state; it provides documentation that can continually be referred back to, even after the work of restoration has covered over some of the damage that came about as the building was falling into ruin. . . . It is impossible to make too great a use of photography in restoration; very often one discovers on a photographic proof some features that went unnoticed on the building itself.

VIOLLET-LE-DUC, "RESTORATION," in *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française*[1]

As early as 1842, only three years after the new process was announced and a year before submitting his restoration project for Notre-Dame, Viollet-le-Duc commissioned the engraver N. P. Lerebours to produce daguerreotypes of the facade of the cathedral. He saw a use for the new medium not only as way to record the various stages of restoration projects but also as a reminder of what had been there before. The photograph becomes the "conscience" of the ruin, reminding the restorer of what he has altered or effaced, in order to record not only the inevitable effects of time and decay but the "before" and "after" in a building's life.[2] In the first chapter of this book I used photographs to much the same purpose, discussing daguerreotypes of the cathedral under scaffolding by Lerebours, Baldus, the Bisson brothers, and Henri Le Secq as "proof" for my chronology of the restoration of the balustrade of Notre-Dame and the creation of the stone chimeras between 1848 and 1853. But there are other photographs taken of the cathedral of Notre-Dame, beginning even during its restoration, which do not record standard "views" of the whole building or its parts, but are evidence of more intimate and empathetic relationships between the new medium and its old stones. Images neither carved nor cut with an etcher's tool but created from the effects of sunlight, these early photographs present a further stage in the nineteenth-century fascination with the chimeras and gargoyles. One could argue that from the very beginning, Viollet-le-Duc's drawings for the chimeras of the cathedral had conceived them as essentially graphic creatures, hewn from

the dichotomy of black and white. Born in the so-called Dark Ages but lingering on to haunt our enlightened modern world, gargoyles were historically positioned in exactly that liminal realm between the darkness of damnation and the light of salvation. In this sense early photography, as a medium whose activating force was light, but which Fox Talbot had described as the "art of fixing a shadow," was the perfect medium for embodying their marginal, shadowy ontology.[3]

One of the most famous of all nineteenth-century photographs shows the pensive horned demon of the north tower (fig. 215). Positioning his camera on the opposite projecting buttress of the balustrade from his subject, the photographer calculated the vantage point so as to produce a radically sweeping recession. This isolates the demon alongside a second, open-beaked bird chimera, whose form is engulfed by the shadows. Between these two, and sharply silhouetted against the white sky, is a man in a top hat. He is standing not, as often described, *next to* the chimera, staring at its wings. Rather, he stands farther back at the other end of the projecting balustrade. He is in this respect looking out beyond and behind the demon toward the cityscape below. The collapsing of spatial layers within the scene creates the illusion that the demon is much larger than it really is, seeming to loom over the human spectator and to juxtapose these two incongruous beings—both archetypal creations of the mid-nineteenth century. Moreover, this kind of trick is only possible in photography. This image was made later in the same year as Méryon's etching *Le Stryge*—1853—and was no doubt influenced by it. Like the famous etching, this too projects human desire onto the stone creation of Viollet-le-Duc. However, Méryon's self is so absorbed into the acid-etched form of his miniaturized but—in relation to the small size of the etched plate—gigantic horned vampire as to become indistinguishable from it. By contrast, in the photograph there exists an objective distance between human and monster, measured in the "objectif," the lens of the camera itself. Méryon had used a mechanical optical device, a "chambre claire," when first sketching the statue and had emphasized in a letter that it was a "real" thing and not a product of his imagination. Such a claim was unnecessary for the photographer who made this image. For a photograph insists upon being "taken" literally, which was Viollet-le-Duc's rational definition of its "recording" function. Yet it was precisely to undermine this faith in appearances, the verisimilitude of the new medium, that this photograph was taken on the balustrade of the north tower of Notre-Dame in 1853. Displacing that secure separation between the real and the unreal, between the light and the dark, it is less a record of architecture than a reverie, dreaming the realm of chimerical fantasy through the chemical process. As well as opening up the possibilities for the uncanny in photography, this image had a powerful political dimension in its own time, a dimension which has been forgotten in the beautiful blur of its Gothicizing gloom.



215. Charles Nègre, portrait of Henri Le Secq on the north tower of Notre-Dame, 1853. Modern salted paper print from paper negative, 325 × 230 mm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund.

1 · *The Dandy as Beholder: Charles Nègre and Henri Le Secq*

The man who took this photograph was Charles Nègre (1820–80). The man in the top hat was his friend, Henri Le Secq (1818–82), another major exponent of the new art.[4] What is remarkable is how much the photograph exudes the personality not only of its maker but also of its subject. The latter was born to an upper-middle-class Parisian family (his father was mayor of the Ninth Arrondissement—the Fourth today) and had attended the Collège Saint Louis, in the shadow of the cathedral. As a youth he had been inspired by Victor Hugo's impassioned and romantic medievalism. Enrolled as a student of the sculptor Jean-Jacques Pradier, his debut at the Salon of 1842 was in genre painting, which he practiced all his life. Le Secq began making photographs only in 1848. An avid collector of wought ironwork and medieval objects, he also owned superb proofs of many of Méryon's etchings and was later a friend of the printmaker.[5] Le Secq had surely seen early drawings or impressions of the etching that later would become famous as *Le Stryge*. He shared with Méryon the love of "vieux Paris," and many of his photographs of the previous year record, like the etchings of his friend, medieval corners of the city that were being leveled by the modernizations of J. J. Berger and Baron Haussmann. His own pose alongside the monster that Méryon also loved has been seen as a witty commentary, a reperformance of Méryon's masterpiece for the camera's eye (fig. 215). With his arm akimbo Le Secq stands proudly and defiantly. He presents something of a dark contrast to the larger stone creature's fleshliness—a being of urbane modernity as opposed to medieval myth. However, certain signs make this black-swathed and bow-tied body with the white handkerkief in his upper breast pocket *not* that of a bourgeois. Le Secq sports a full beard under his top hat. This would have tipped off any contemporary observer to his political sympathies. In 1848 the Ministry of Public Instruction had issued a circular forbidding professors to wear beards on the grounds that these were "symbols of anarchy."[6] Le Secq is thus not the typical "gentleman" that we might at first think, and he shares something with his sentinel-like stone companion.

In 1853 Paris was an abyss from which artists like Le Secq and Nègre might have sought refuge up on the tower. For it was a city under martial law, oppressed by a new political regime which one English commentator described: "Whole quarters, refuges of poverty and democracy have been cut down; broad streets by which fresh air and artillery may penetrate in every direction, have been opened. . . . Fine masonry is certainly an excellent substitute for liberty."[7] Nègre's photograph can in this sense be read as a piece of Hugolian propaganda, a tribute to the poet who had fled Paris in fear for his life the year before. Now he published attacks on the new regime, like *Napoléon le petit* and *Châtiments*, from the high tower of exile. These works were

banned in France, but thousands of clandestine copies were smuggled from Brussels, sewn by ladies returning from abroad into their skirts and eagerly read.[8]

To be a Hugolâtre in the 1850s was to be a radical. In *Notre-Dame de Paris,* as we outlined in chapter 3, gargoyles carved in stone were symbols of the artistic freedom no longer available to artists like Le Secq and Nègre. Paris during these years was described by contemporaries as a kind of police state, where spies peeked round every corner and flowerpots were banned from windowsills. The chimera has a dual signification in Nègre's photograph. On the one hand, it was a symbol of the weight and oppression of an unchangeable past carved in stone, and on the other, it stood watch over the old Paris, a homely demon secured against the horrors of the new regime. In his poem against those who sought to destroy medieval buildings, "Ô murs! Ô crénaux! Ô tourelles!" Hugo had described medieval monuments like Notre-Dame as "lieux où le coeur met ses chimères" (places where the heart puts its fantasies).[9] By standing next to the most Hugolian of all the chimeras, Le Secq—who described his distress at the failure of the reforms of 1848 and the establishment of the Second Empire in November 1852—was not only linking himself to the medieval past but, through the political ideals of the century's most influential romantic writer, to the political present.

The man who took this photograph was even more clearly disappointed with the reversion to censorship and repression. Writing to his father in the midst of the coup d'état, on 4 March 1848, when total liberty of the press and the freedom to hold meetings had been announced, Charles Nègre had proclaimed "je suis tout pour la Republique."[10] The chimeras of the cathedral had seen freedom illuminate the city only briefly in the very years they were created, under the influence of a writer now seen as the devil himself by the new Napoleonic regime. For those who could get the joke, Nègre's photograph of his friend was a tribute to an exiled living demon rather than a stone chimera.

In the heavily censored police state of Paris in 1853, when political caricaturists like Daumier found themselves out of work, this photograph was a surreptitious stab at the new regime, a coded message about the artist's freedom and autonomy. Writing the year before about his photographs of his native region of the Midi, Nègre had described himself as a painter following his personal tastes: "Wherever I was able to avoid producing architectural precision, I produced the picturesque; I then sacrificed, if necessary, certain details, in favor of an imposing effect appropriate for giving a monument its true character and for conserving the poetic charm which encompasses it."[11] In choosing to combine both the picturesque and the precise record in his photographs, Nègre challenged the widely held view of many of his contemporaries that the new medium was predominantly an aid for artists and not an art in itself. Writing

in the photographic periodical *La Lumière* in 1851, Nègre had already described its potential, allowing the artist guiding the lens to produce "effects that make us dream . . . sites whose powerful and bold silhouettes astonish and terrify us."[12] Nègre's view of his friend alongside the demon makes the same claim visually.

There is another photograph of another man in a top hat on the balustrade of the cathedral, probably made on the very same afternoon, which even more powerfully evokes Victor Hugo's shadowy cathedral of terror (fig. 216). This time the roles are reversed: the photographer is Le Secq, and the subject is Nègre.[13] Although similar in its deep recession, the composition is horizontal rather than vertical, with a more expansive, less tightly woven core. The human figure on the right has stepped back into the corner and is almost lost among the shadows of pinnacles and chimeras. This allows the three chimeras (nos. 17–19), the single horned demon seen from behind and the two others even more prominently placed—the eagle devouring grapes and the dragon with bent arms—to haunt the scene. Lit by strong sunlight, these forms seem alive compared with the shadowy human presence lingering behind them. Only in the beautiful wax-paper negative are details visible like Nègre's arm at his waist, mirroring that of his friend in the other photograph but also the bent arms of the chimera to the left. Only in the reversed world of the negative, a wholly new way of seeing in opposite values, is the human being's presence luminous, his black suit registering as angelic rather than demonic in its brightness (fig. 217).

Le Secq's image is, as we would expect, much closer in spirit to that of his etcher friend Méryon than to that of Nègre, even though the Stryge is not present. Man does not stand proud on the tower, superior to the throng of monsters. Instead, he is caught up himself with their shadowy world. This less communicative, retiring portrait, using Notre-Dame and its statues as a stage on which the chimeras are in the limelight, also uses more of Paris, in what is another direct reference to Méryon's etching. In the left foreground is a diminutive Tour Saint-Jacques, which only serves to emphasize how much Méryon had enlarged and distorted the cityscape in relation to the cathedral. It is as if, in making these two photographs, the two men had each taken a part of Méryon's image and enlarged an aspect of it in the new medium. If Nègre's image of Le Secq is picturesque and witty, it is Le Secq's image of Nègre, in its problematizing of the very status of the human, that looks to the future of the medium in the next half century.

Le Secq's photograph is part of a unique vision he was developing in this period which makes him the first photographer to explore and understand images of the gargoyles and chimeras of the cathedral, not only as Viollet-le-Duc had originally conceived them in his subtley shaded drawings, but as having an autonomous life of their own. Another paper print from 1853 is taken from the far southernmost projec-

216. Henri Le Secq, portrait of Charles Nègre on the balustrade of Notre-Dame, 1853. Modern salted paper print, 325 × 230 mm. MAP CNMHS.

217. Henri Le Secq, portrait of Charles Nègre on the balustrade of Notre-Dame, 1853. Modern salted paper negative, 325 × 230 mm. Musée des arts decoratifs, Paris.

218. Henri Le Secq, three chimeras at Notre-Dame, 1853. Salted paper negative. MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

tion of the south tower and focuses in closer on a trio of chimeras—a triangulation created by their positioning at the sharp corners of the balustrade (nos. 24–26; fig. 218). Without a human presence the stone creatures now assume an even more disquieting attentive and anthropomorphic presence. As in his portrait of Nègre, Le Secq made the most of the deep shadows to bring out strong contrasts, and he silhouettes the striking beaked head of the Horus chimera against the misty outline of the city beyond. Such effects had been impossible with the daguerreotype, which produced a tiny, brilliantly sharp and unique negative image on a silver plate. This same powerful combination of Notre-Dame and the distant views of the city, evident in Le Secq's photographs, had already been exploited in earlier daguerreotypes of the cathedral, which an American reviewer of 1839 had enthusiastically compared to Hugo's novel in their "minutest beauties."[14] The dry waxed paper process used by Nègre and Le Secq was not capable of the same dense detail but had other advantages. The photographers employed large cameras to produce paper negatives that could then serve to make multiple prints. Both negatives and prints required the sun's rays to expose them. The forms were actually absorbed into the paper's fibers under the effect of sunlight, so that even when the negatives were waxed to heighten the clarity of outlines the impressions they produced were still soft and smudged in appearance. This

gave them what Eugenia Parry Janis has called "a built-in patina . . . a well-worn look that appealed to connoisseurs of old prints, art lovers and men of taste."[15] Nègre, more the painter, retouched the paper negative of the Le Secq portrait (the original of which is in the Jammes Collection, Paris). With a brush and pencil he painted the sky opaque to make it pure white in the print; he also shaded part of the demon's wing to accentuate its steep curve. By contrast, Le Secq tended to leave his negatives untouched, which enhanced their latent mystery.

Paradoxically, this was exactly the period when, in contrast to the romantic sublimity of a print, the photograph was deemed a valuable, "authentic" document by the Mission héliographique. Significantly, it had been Le Secq and not Nègre who had been chosen in 1851 for the Mission héliographique set up by the Commission des monuments historiques to make elaborate studies of the cathedrals of Amiens, Reims, and Chartres.[16] The committee ruled out the use of daguerreotypes because they were too small in scale and had the problem of image reversal. Paper was the preferred medium: large scale, accurate to light and shade, and perfectly suited to the picturesque vision of the previous decades. Moreover, paper negatives meant that multiple copies of the same image could be produced. Le Secq's photographs allowed people to see things previously unseen but also crucially linked the architecture of the Middle Ages with this new, modern way of seeing.

Henri de Lacretelle, writing in *La Lumière* in February 1853, described the relationship between the photographs of the cathedrals made by Le Secq both to the architects who had restored the cathedrals with so much fervor and to great writers who had revealed the splendors of the cathedrals to modernity—namely Chateaubriand and Victor Hugo. No epoch has an architecture more "poétique" than that of the Middle Ages, says this author.[17] Another article in the same journal reviews Le Secq's photographs included in the Universal Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in London in 1851, in which the photographer is lauded for, in a sense, "restoring" the cathedral, not in stone but in light: "The young artist has recorded, stone by stone, the cathedrals of Strasbourg and Reims in over a hundred different prints. Thanks to him we have climbed all the steeples. . . . What we never could have discovered through our own eyes he has seen for us. . . . One might think the saintly artists of the Middle Ages had foreseen the daguerreotype in placing on high their statues and stone carvings where birds alone circling the spires could marvel at their detail and perfection. . . . The entire cathedral is reconstructed, layer on layer, in wonderful effects of sunlight, shadow and rain. M. Le Secq, too, has built his monument."[18] Photography would make the study of these sculptures, impossible to see in detail from below, possible. Just as the new medium was used at the Paris mental hospitals to construct the various stages of dementia, aphasia, and hysteria, it would become

the paramount diagnostic tool in exploring the symptomology of national styles in medieval art and architecture.

Up among the gargoyles and chimeras between the towers of the cathedral, these two men, who had been friends since they were both pupils in the atelier of the painter Paul Delaroche in the 1840s and who were neighbors on the nearby Île Saint Louis, did more than take snapshots of each other. They created a new homosocial space in the city. After struggling up the winding stairs that led to the balustrade with their heavy cameras and tripods, the two seem to have made the most of the situation. Both had already achieved this vantage point in their effort to capture a Hugolian "bird's-eye view." This is clear from an article in *La Lumière* in August 1852 praising Nègre's photograph of the Hôtel de Ville, "prie de la platforme des tours Notre Dame."[19] But the effect that the two photographers wished to create in these images in which they placed themselves as objects of each other's gaze was different from that of the earnest, picturesque medievalism of the first half of the century.

Both photographers were playing with a distinctly new urban form of self-presentation and producing it for the first time within the photographic medium. This identity was that of the flaneur: the solitary observer of the urban crowd who became an archetypal mode of subjectivity in nineteenth-century art and literature. Victor Hugo described in *Les Misérables* how "strolling while musing like a flaneur is the best way for a philosopher to spend his time," but it was Walter Benjamin's later studies of Baudelaire and the arcades which recovered this archetypal figure as a crucial one for modernity.[20] Benjamin saw the flaneur's inherent ambiguity—at once a social rebel and yet also a producer of commodities for the literary marketplace. Speaking of Baudelaire, Benjamin wrote that "as flâneur he goes to the marketplace, supposedly to take a look at it, but already in reality to find a buyer."[21]

This ambiguity is evoked in Nègre's photograph of Le Secq, titled *Upper Gallery of Notre Dame*. It was sold to a print dealer in London on 21 January 1854, suggesting that the photographers quickly sought to disseminate their images of the chimeras to the few but discriminating collectors who constituted the audience of early paper photography.[22] At the same time, they sought to play out the distance and self-irony described by Baudelaire as the gaze of modernity. Of the two images, the one of Nègre (fig. 216) seems most successfully to render the observer as a "prince who is everywhere in possession of his incognito."[23] Lurking in the shadows, he both looks aggressively and keeps himself aloof. Nègre's gaze is the gaze of alienated man. It is the gaze of the "flaneur, whose way of living still bestowed a conciliatory gleam over the growing destitution of men in the great city." The flaneur "still stood at the margin, of the great city as of the bourgeois class. . . . He sought his asylum in the crowd."[24] Just as there was always a diabolical side to Baudelaire's flaneur, mingling

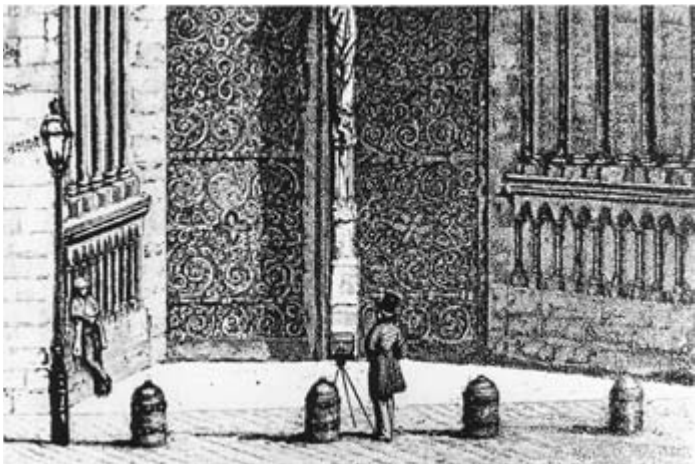
amid the streets "where viscious monsters lie waiting," so too the crowd in which this stroller is lost is not human.[25] Le Secq photographs his friend as a flaneur among the gargoyles.

That the flaneur of Paris was also its memory and thus related to the new medium of photography was emphasized by a remarkable passage in Fournel's *Ce qu'on voit dans les rues de Paris:* "Such a man is a mobile and impassioned daguerreotype that records the slightest traces, and in which they are reproduced with their ever-changing reflections, the course of things, the movement of the city, the many physiognomies of the public mind, of beliefs, of hatreds, and of the antipathy and admiration of the crowd."[26]

The black dress worn by both men, even in the glare of the afternoon sun as it strikes the western facade and balustrade, is what Baudelaire referred to as "the inevitable uniform of our suffering age, carrying on its shoulders, black and narrow, the mark of perpetual mourning."[27] In 1850 the *Journal des tailleurs* noted that formal dress for men consisted only of "un habit noir, un pantalon noir, un gilet blanc et un autre noir, une cravate noire et une autre blanche." This enforced mourning, which John Harvey calls "the putting on of impersonality," also provided young men with a melancholy self-image.[28]

Another photograph by Charles Marville published by Louis-Désiré Blanquart-Évrard in the same period shows a young flaneur in white trousers posing in front of the thirteenth-century sculpture of the Porte Rouge on the north flank of Notre-Dame, linking the Gothic revival with another archetypal masculine role of the period—the dandy.[29] It seems that this persona was adopted by a whole group of young photographers, many of them disillusioned with the failure of revolutionary change in 1848 and the establishment of a repressive imperial regime. Next to his horned Mephistophelian counterpart Le Secq clearly presents himself as this more venerable, distinctly egotistical type, as described by Baudelaire in *The Painter of Modern Life* (fig. 215). The true dandy's ruling passion was "a burning need to acquire originality, within the apparent bounds of convention. . . . It is the delight in causing astonishment, and the proud satisfaction of never oneself being astonished."[30] His top hat provides the modern man with his "horns." Part of the incongruity for us today in both Nègre's and Le Secq's photographs is the juxtaposition of the bestial medieval monsters with this sign of archcivilization—the top hat.

Why were early photographers so attracted to medieval monuments? Was it something in the new medium itself that called for a return of the repressed, or was it not more the way the photograph made more apparent the difference between now and then, between human movement and stone stillness? When the earliest photographs ever taken of Notre-Dame, by N. P. Lerebours around 1840, were used to



219. S. Hurlimann, "Portail de Notre Dame" (detail). Engraving after daguerreotype. From *Excursions daguerriennes*, published by N. P. Lerebours, early 1840s. BNF.

220. Honoré Daumier, *Nadar Elevating Photography to the Level of Art*. Lithograph, 1862. BNF.

make engravings in his *Excursions daguerriennes*, bystanders and pedestrians had to be added because the long exposure times of the daguerreotype did not register their presence. The engraver Hurlimann added among the usual bystanders a photographer with his large box camera on its tripod and his imagined client leaning against the lower part of the south portal of the west facade (fig. 219).[31] The photographer in his top hat is waiting for the exposure to happen, his subject (wearing less formal headgear) holding the pose for the long period required. In Daumier's famous 1862 lithograph of Félix Nadar snapping Paris from the vantage point of his hot-air balloon, *Nadar Elevating Photography to the Level of Art*, the loss of the top hat, which flies off behind the eager snapper of the world below, is a crucial sign of the folly of excess, the dangerous speed that this urge to take over the world portends (fig. 220). The trope of the Hugolian "bird's-eye view" of Paris discussed in chapter 3 was expanded by photographers who sought ever-more-panoramic control of the cityscape.[32] What had been the devil's vantage point in the 1840s became, only a decade later, the gaze of the demonic dandy, the man and his machine.

The top hat was also a sign of the modern and modernization. Those who view the massive demolition and rebuilding of Paris under Baron Haussmann in the next decade in prints by Daumier and others also sport top hats as they point to the

crouched-over forms of bare-headed or cloth-capped workmen knocking down and rebuilding the city. Young men in top hats are perched in garret windows to observe the city (fig. 221). Balzac links the notions of "spectacle" and "speculation" in the destruction of the old city: "The rentier stops . . . in front of the houses being demolished by the Tribe of Speculators. Like his fellow gawkers, he is planted there with his nose in the air as he watches a stone, which, while being moved with a lever by a mason, falls from atop a wall; he doesn't leave this spot until the stone has fallen. . . . When it has reached the ground, he goes on his way, excessively happy."[33] The two top-hatted dandies in the photographs are, by contrast, not gawkers at destruction but melancholy flaneurs of impending ruin. Lurking on the parapet of the church above the city in the midst of its destruction, they are thus figures of power, haughty yet helpless to act, like gargoyles staring into the vacuum of modernity.

If Nègre's superb photograph is less about recording Gothic architecture and more concerned with staging a hidden Hugolian tribute during a time of severe censorship against artists, was Le Secq's photograph of Nègre similarly freighted? The work of Le Secq seems more personal than political, and although his image also has a strong atmosphere of foreboding, its sources are to be found less in the political problems of Paris in this period than in the poetic experiments of the city of the "black sun." The use of dark, inky shadows especially suggests the recurring "noirs" of Baudelaire's poetry, the "jour noir" sadder than night. Another influential poetic sensibility in this fashion for the somber urban phantasmagoria whose vision was close to these photographers was Gérard de Nerval. In an early poem called "Notre-Dame de Paris" he presents a view of the cathedral diametrically opposite to that of its restorer Viollet-le-Duc. The poet imagined it not gleaming and finished in the future but as an "austere ruin," a "heavy carcass" that, in a thousand years, men will still come from far and wide to contemplate. Like Le Secq, de Nerval was much inspired by Victor Hugo, describing how these future visitors will see not so much the building but the book that has killed it. They are described as "dreamers, rereading the book of Victor [Hugo]: thus they think they see the old basilica . . . powerful and magnificent, rising up before their eyes like the shadow of a corpse."[34] In the same way, the two photographers saw each other and themselves as standing not upon something newly restored, but upon a ruin, whose dark crumbling mass they fix on paper. Le Secq saw the stones not as chimeras completed only months before, but as phantoms living into eternity. He situated his friend Nègre in the dark shadows cast by the "corpse cathedral" like the figure opening one of de Nerval's most famous poems:

221. Man in top hat writing or drawing from a garret window. From Louis Lurine, *Les Rues de Paris* (Paris: Kugelmann, 1844), vol. 2.

I am the shadowed man—bereaved—unconsoled

Aquitaine's prince by his ruined tower,
My only star's dead and my spangled lute
Bears the black sun of melancholy.[35]

This poem was published in December 1853, at the end of the very year that the balustrade became a locus of romantic identity for artists and photographers. De Nerval published a whole series of poems a year later with the title *Les Chimères*, in riposte to an attack by the novelist Alexandre Dumas, who had described his writings as a lunatic "land of hallucinations and chimeras."[36] In choosing this title de Nerval was insisting that his poems were not the incoherent ramblings of a madman but rather emerged in a "state of supernaturalist reverie" in which as a poet, he did not seek to imitate the outward forms of nature, but rather to contemplate eidetic images and symbols lodged deep within. His "black sun of melancholy," for example, refers to a detail in the famous engraving by Dürer that lay behind so many romantic presentations of artistic self-consciousness. Another poem in the series seems to recall the exquisite sentience of old stones, the almost-aliveness of the chimeras of the cathedral, in describing how walls can have watchful eyes and how "often the most obscure of beings houses a hidden God, and like a nascent eye, veiled by its lids, a pure spirit buds beneath a husk of stones."[37]

Nègre's and Le Secq's photographs are likewise romantic reveries. They do not record the restoration of Notre-Dame but seek to efface that very process by making its architecture a timeless presence. De Nerval's "black sun of melancholy" perfectly describes the radical reversals of their paper negatives (fig. 217), which make humans into white ghosts and monsters into dark substantial flesh. The photographers imagine its fabric as a place for self-presentation, a site for establishing residence, somewhere paradoxically that one might call "home" (as against the *unheimlich*—the uncanny).

Philippe Hamon has described how lyric texts of the second half of the nineteenth century "often have recourse to architectural metaphors where the 'I' likens itself to an edifice." Baudelaire's mind is like a "tower crashing" or "a tomb in which for centuries I have moved to-and-fro," and de Nerval's poetry displays the same search for identity through empathy with inanimate objects, places, and buildings. This "provides a means of uttering the grammatically correct but existentially improbable and impossible phrase—'I am dead'—as well as a means of denying death by assimilating it to architectural structures which resist time and survive their inhabitants."[38] Just as the poetic allusion to architecture affords the reader a sense of control over the amorphous nature of space and time, Nègre's and Le Secq's photographs of each other on the tower of Notre-Dame capture romantic subjects who catch them-

222. Henri Le Secq, man in a cloth cap on the inner balustrade of Notre-Dame. Paper print from paper negative. MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

selves, create themselves, in the light but also in the space of architecture. It is not the mysterious stone creatures, devoid of life, but the living subjects, the photographers themselves, who hover as unreal, intangible, and inscrutable phenomena before our eyes. It is they who become the chimeras of the new medium—the first monsters of photography.

II · *The Worker as Beholder: Henri Le Secq and Viollet-le-Duc*

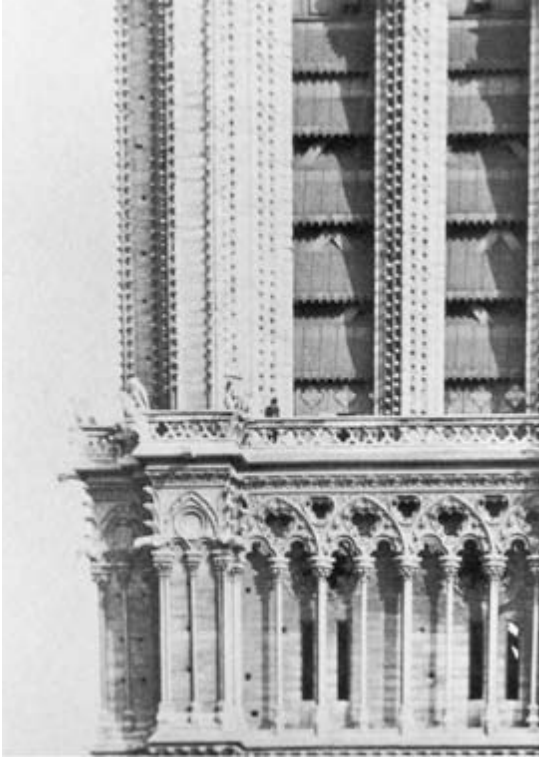
Another photograph made by Henri Le Secq at Notre-Dame presents an altogether different vision of the male beholder of Gothic architecture. Taken not on the balustrade but on the gallery that runs along the nave, the photograph caught a man leaning contemplatively on the parapet (fig. 222).[39] I say caught, but in fact the scene had to be carefully staged and the subject remain still for at least ten seconds, which was the shortest exposure time for the waxed paper process. Unlike his own portrait taken alongside the chimeras by Nègre and his own view of his friend, in this image the man adopts the pose of being unposed. He is not wearing a top hat, but a cloth cap, called a casquette. This photograph bears an uncanny resemblance to an illustration

223. Édouard de Beaumont, *Types d'insurgés*, 1848. Lithograph.

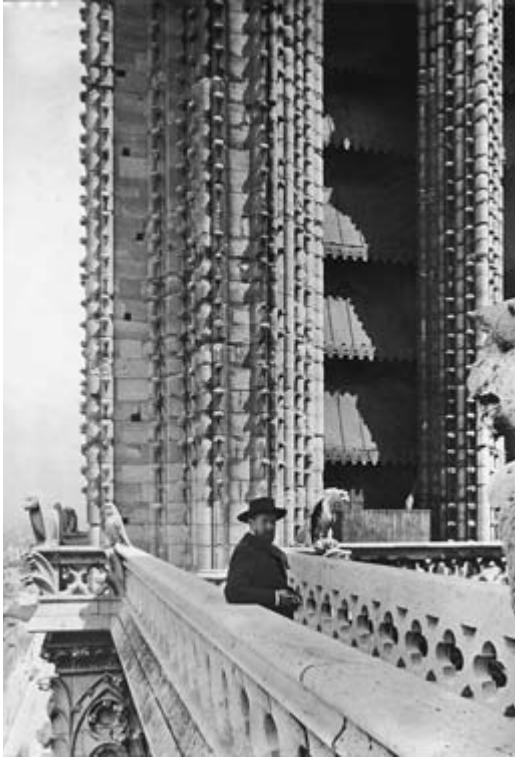
of Viollet-le-Duc's made only a few years earlier and published in 1851 in the *Revue générale de l'architecture et des travaux publics* (see chap. 1, fig. 22). Here a man in a similar costume leans on the parapet of the north tower with the very same chimeras visible that appear in Le Secq's portrait of Nègre. Even more striking is the compositional similarity between Viollet-le-Duc's starkly orthogonal view of the balustrade and Le Secq's famous image. It would seem that Viollet-le-Duc the draftsman and creator of the chimeras was just as important a source for the two photographers as Méryon the etcher.

The casquette worn by the subject was associated with the supposedly dangerous lower classes in the city. Note Édouard de Beaumont's print *Types of Insurgents* from the revolutionary year 1848, when "the man in the smock became, not sentinel but bandit and assassin" (fig. 223).[40]

I have already suggested that the creator of the chimeras, Viollet-le-Duc himself, had a particular social vision of the civilizing capacities of Gothic architecture for the working classes. Placing a worker as beholder on the balustrade heroicizes the subject of Gothic art as a universal natural man, exactly the opposite of the aesthete or dandy incarnated in Nègre's portrait of Le Secq. Whether Le Secq was making such a point



224. Séraphin-Médéric Mieusement, man next to le Stryge on the grand gallery of Notre-Dame, 1893 (detail). Albumen paper print. MAP CNMHS.



225. F. Martin-Sabon, "Balustrade entre les tours du côté ouest," ca. 1900. MAP CNMHS.

in his photograph here is hard to know. What is striking is that the bourgeois' identification with the beasts of the balustrade, which Viollet-le-Duc allowed even for his cloth-capped worker, is not possible for Le Secq's proletarian beholder, who looks down from the bare parapet with only a large stone pinnacle beside him and a much-eroded and not-yet-restored true gargoyle projecting out from the wall below. We do not know who this man was. He was probably not a mason, since he is not wearing the smock of the laborer seen in other photographs of the chantier during the restoration. A bourgeois could just as easily wear a casquette in an effort to appear more raffish or even dress up as a peasant, as Henri Le Secq himself did in the frontispiece to an album of photographs he made of Amiens Cathedral in 1851.

It should not be forgotten that the hat was an essential part of the wardrobe for both men and women in the nineteenth century; indeed, the hat has always served as a symbol of the wearer's rank. Men wearing hats of all types appear to have visited the site, suggesting the wide social range. One standing alongside the Stryge sports a bowler in a distant view of the west front from 1893 (fig. 224). A dapper bearded figure from a decade later wears a stylish boater as he stands on the long gallery between the towers (fig. 225). This is likely a portrait of the photographer Félix Martin-Sabon,

226. Léon Gimpel, *Une Chambre à coucher peu banale: Campement sur la galerie ouest de Notre Dame pour (ne pas) voir la comète de Haley, 18–19 mai, 1910*. Silver gelatin print. Société francaise de photographie, Paris.

who lists this photograph along with dozens of others he made of what he calls the "animaux fantastiques" of the balustrade in his sale catalogue of 1910.[41] These scenes form part of the fascinating pictorial history of the balustrade of Notre-Dame as a site of male sartorial display and strolling for late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century savants, *archéologues*, and just plain tourists. In the many hours I have spent up on the balustrade I have observed that this urge to have one's picture taken among the monsters is still a strong one which many contemporary tourists replay. What these photographs suggest is not the difference between flesh and stone but rather the joke that the subject has been stilled into a gargoyle-like state by the apparatus itself. The immovability of the statue and the vivacity of the human subject become one in a continuum of dead images, all movement stiffened in the frame of the photograph.

The most charming photograph of a man in this unusual locale is a self-portrait by Léon Gimpel, *A Rather Unusual Bedroom: Camping on the West Gallery of Notre-Dame, in Order (Not to) See Haley's Comet, 18–19 May, 1910* (fig. 226).[42] In the tradition of the flaneur portrait of the artist, the photographer has set up a camera and placed his lamp on the parapet ledge ready to photograph the heavenly phenomenon. Looking directly into the camera from under the broad brim of his cap from the

relaxed position of a hammock which he has attached to the stone crockets of the cathedral, the wax-moustached Gimpel appears in exactly the same spot as Nègre sixty years earlier, next to the eagle devouring grapes and the superbly snarling dragon with long tongue and bent arms. The ominous shadows that had filled the paper print of the earlier photograper are no longer visible in this oval—turned on its side—perhaps an allusion to the shape of Méryon's masterpiece. The large glass negative allowed a crisper, more defined focus. There is only the faintest shadow of the city beyond. Here the balustrade becomes even more a male space, like an annex to a gentlemen's club where one can relax and contemplate the machine of the cosmos. This is a self-enclosed, even solipsistic space of reverie. It was not only because it was thought that there were too many stairs for ladies to climb in their tight corsets and bustles that we do not see many women present in images of the balustrade in the first decades after its completion. It was because the site had been claimed from the very beginning for a self-assured male subject, whether he be restorer, worker, or bourgeois and gentleman.

III · *The Beast as Beholder: From Marville to Mieusement*

> The years 1860 to 1880 witnessed a new frenzy for images, which circulated rapidly between camera and easel, between canvas and plate and paper—sensitized or printed; and with all the new powers acquired there came a new freedom of transposition, displacement, and transformation, of resemblance and dissimulation, of reproduction, duplication and trickery of effect. It engendered a wholesale theft of images, an appropriation still utterly novel, but already dextrous, amused and unscrupulous.
>
> MICHEL FOUCAULT, *"Photogenic Painting"*[43]

When another pioneering early photographer, Charles Marville (1816–79), ascended the steps to the balustrade, he saw the chimeras in their relation to the cathedral and city quite differently from his contemporaries Le Secq and Nègre. Instead of looking west out from the parapet, he turned around on the middle of the balcony stretching between the towers and photographed the roof of the great nave of the building, with the chimeras in the foreground looking east (fig. 227). The photograph is entitled *Combles de la cathédrale Notre-Dame, Paris*. What is at the center of the scene is not a person or a chimera but the spire designed by Viollet-le-Duc, completed in 1858. Another view of the spire without the beasts is preserved in the Musée des monuments français and labeled *Restauration de Notre-Dame de Paris* along with the names of the architect, Viollet-le-Duc, and the sculptor, Geoffroy-Dechaume. This

227. Charles Marville, *Combles de la cathédrale Notre-Dame, Paris*, 1858. Albumen paper print from a collodion glass negative. MAP. (Photo: CNMHS.)

suggests that the entire group of photographs was probably made by Marville at the behest of Viollet-le-Duc himself on the completion of the flèche.[44]

The much finer tonal and linear detail in this photograph resulted from a new and very difficult technique in which the photographer made a negative on a large, wet collodion plate rather than on paper. This would have entailed the photographer's working under a dark-tent pitched up on the balustrade and having all his noxious chemicals and baths close to hand. The result is a complex composition in which the chimeras are propelled by a powerful narrative suggestion that makes the photograph more than a document of the restoration. The only "medieval" statue in the whole scene is the larger-than-life-size angel blowing its horn as if to announce the Last Judgment at the end of time, near the center of the picture in the dark midground. This remarkable sculpture from about 1220 appears in an earlier paper negative made by Charles Nègre in 1854 before the restoration, when its wings were still broken.[45] Now it stands sentinel as a remnant of the thirteenth century's expectation of the Last Judgment, calling not humanity but the animals and monsters to attention. On the left, three of the most "naturalistic" of the animal chimeras, the elephant, the snarling leopard, and the bear, are strongly lit while the darker silhouettes of two more human monsters appear on the right—the old Jew and the dog-headed woman with her long, rubbery neck. The angel seems to turn in their direction, toward the south.

Farther back, the steep perspective ending at the delicate tracery and pinnacles of the new spire is broken by more statues: the twelve apostles designed by Viollet-le-Duc and executed by Geoffroy-Dechaume and his shop. They sway elegantly as if dancing down the rooftops.

That this became a second major viewpoint for tourists and fans of the cathedral can be seen in the engraving by Leopold Flameng of 1860, which takes much the same vantage as Marville's although the composition is more vertical and includes the whole of the imposing new flèche (fig. 228). This was published in one of the many books to appear in midcentury about the past and future of the great city, illustrating an article by Auguste Marc-Bayeux, "La Flèche de Notre Dame."[46] The author, in describing the print, might also be describing Marville's photograph in his dramatization of the sculpture: "As you look at them from below, a hallucination seizes you: do they not seek to destroy the portal in order to throw down its pieces on those people who seek refuge within the church? Here a horrible ghoul looks at us, a bear with the ears of a donkey, a horned bull, a horrifyingly lascivious goat, a Jew, the outcast par excellence with his pointed cap."[47]

Bringing the chimeras to life by photographing them as though they were seeing agents themselves—fully capable of sensation and cognition—was to be one of photography's most profound contributions not only to the history of gargoyle representations but to how we view sculpture in general. For the photograph introduced this very ambiguity between the living and the dead, between stone and flesh, precisely because of its close association with reality. As Kenneth Gross has argued, the fantasy that a statue lives does not depend so much on the desire to restore life to the dead as on "a covert desire for, or trend toward, the *in*animate; that the idea of a living statue arises out of a desire for the inhuman, the material, out of an inchoate demand for a partial or dialectical identification with the condition of stone, the dead literal."[48] This fantasy would "give form to a wish to inhabit, or to impose on others, a state that holds desire, motion, and life within the precincts of something dead, a state in some measure passive, inert, inorganic, stonelike. The fantasized, if not wholly monstrous, meeting of human life with the state of the inanimate statue would thus project an existence freed at once from the brutal inanimateness and dissolution of death and from the frustrations of embodied life."[49] This is a special trope peculiar to photography—a visual medium that shows death at work. But the photograph's uncanny stilling of life, or animation of death, also creates exactly the ambiguity of suspension. If statues can become mirrors of our internal objects, what happens when those mirrors are themelves mirrored by the camera, producing a kind of double death? At two removes from life the photographs of the chimera statues, perched on their precipitous vantage points, and seeming to stare and scream and to

228. Leopold Flameng, *Flèche de Notre-Dame de Paris*, 1860. Etching. BNF.

cry out, make peculiarly poignant emblems of the relationship between interiority and exteriority, between life and death.

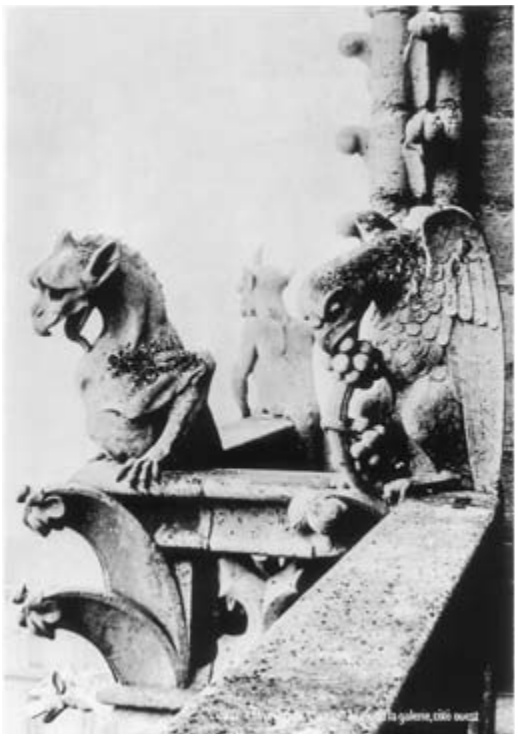
The conceit of Marville's photograph is that the monsters are marginalized and in obeisance to the sound of the angel's trumpet, the voice of God at the center. This was played upon by another of the great illustrator-fantasists of the fin de siècle, Albert Robida, in his 1896 book *Paris à travers l'histoire* (fig. 229). In the heading to his chapter on the cathedral he takes up the idea of the chimeras looking in toward the trumpeting angel but has gathered even more of them, as though they had come to life in the dead of night and had gathered round to witness their own denigration by the divine. An amalgam of all the monsters, the squatting ape, the howling dog, and shrouded birds form a crowd described in Robida's text, which includes an interesting interpretation of their supposed function during the Middle Ages:

> These strange statues leaning on the balustrade above the grand gallery, these chimeras, vipers, and fantastic beasts that the centuries have eaten away and that had to be remade in our own day with the help of their remains, these horned devils using their stone eyes to contemplate or survey Paris, what spectacles has old Lutèce not given them! . . . It seems that in placing this crown of diabolical figures on the brow of the monument, where before so many virgins, martyrs, and saints the prayers of crowds rise up like incense, the architects of the Middle Ages, ironical philosophers, thought to take evil into account and to provide patron saints worthy of those bloodthirsty and predatory beings who swarm about the lowest depths of large cities, the sinister scum of human agglomerations.[50]

229. Albert Robida, the chimeras and the angel. From *Paris à travers l'histoire*, 1896.

Robida views the chimeras as I did in an earlier chapter—as social as well as supernatural signs, embodying human degradation in the modern city.

The chimeras came to uncanny life most powerfully, however, in the work of an until recently little-known professional photographer from Blois, Séraphin-Médéric Mieusement (1840–1905). Mieusement was charged after 1881 with the official job of photographing all the cathedrals of France for the Ministère des cultes.[51] In a series dating to around 1893 the beasts of the balustrade of Notre-Dame take on a powerful presence in views taken both from a distance and in close-up.[52] In "Angle de la galerie, côté ouest" (fig. 230), Mieusement photographs the same three creatures and uses the angular composition of Le Secq before him, but moves his camera much closer. Mieusement used the gelatin dry negative process, which still involved wielding a large camera with heavy glass plates, but with more flexibility of viewpoint he is able to imbue each beast with its own personality. Exploiting the warm sepia tones in the large 30 × 40 cm print, Mieusement brings out the cruelty mingled with grace in these



230. Séraphin-Médéric Mieusement, "Angle de la galerie, côté ouest," 1892. Albumen print from glass negative. MAP CNMHS.

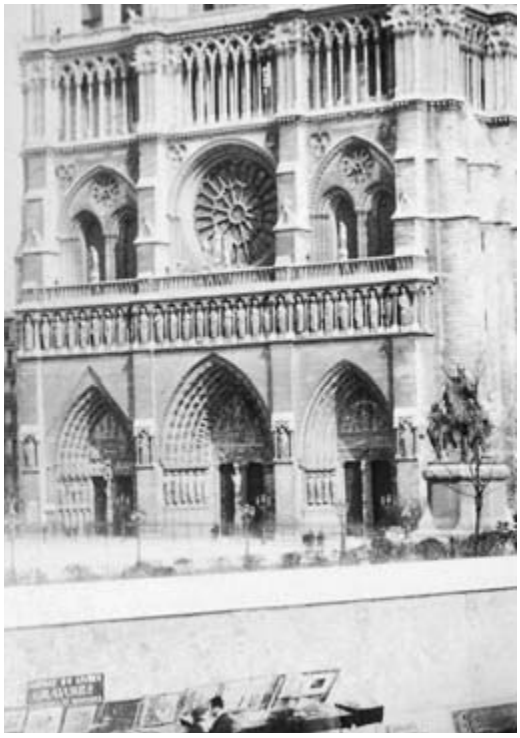
231. Séraphin-Médéric Mieusement, "Chimère de la galerie." From *Mieusement, cathédrales de France*, 1881–1905. MAP. (Photo: author.)

stone creatures. Since they are alone, undisturbed by any other human presence, it is the chimeras who are now posing to have their portraits taken, alone or sometimes in pairs. Mieusement was the first photographer to take the melancholy demon's portrait with the cityscape relegated unobtrusively to the background and without the architectural context (fig. 231). The more supple albumen printing technique also allowed him to capture the texture of the limestone, its cracking, blistering, and crumbling. This chemical process seemed perfectly suited to registering through the ephemeral effects of light upon stone this process of decay, as intricately wrought human artifice returned to its elemental form. Paradoxically, photographs of portions of the restored new sculptures of the towers, especially the exposed chimeras, reveal that they were succumbing to the same inexorable process. In Mieusement's photographs the chimeras no longer have the sharp, crisp newness visible in the photographs of

the 1850s by Le Secq and Nègre or another series, probably made in the 1880s, preserved in the Médiatheque du patrimoine.[53] They have accumulated dirt, stains, and patches of damp moss—the patina of time that makes them hard to distinguish from the thirteenth-century stones of other parts of the edifice. Here, even before the century's end, the chimeras had begun their inexorable decomposition, the death even of the inorganic that only the photograph captures.

Nineteenth-century photographers, beginning with Le Secq, effectively separated these sculptures from their function in the figurative, organic architecture of Viollet-le-Duc. Medieval gargoyles and chimeras were not conceived of as statues in the proper sense, as autonomous simulacra of living beings; rather, they were always seen as an inherent part of the structure, emerging from out of it. But these photographs make the chimeras seem to breathe with a self-containedness that separates them from their anchor on the cathedral. The petrified living object is one of the tropes of the uncanny, in which the barrier that separates the living from the dead is transgressed. Caught in Mieusement's lens, these statues seem to be flesh and feathers turning into stone, or stone and feathers turning into flesh. It is exactly this confusion between the animate and the inanimate that Freud would not long after describe as fundamental to that alienated recognition we call "the uncanny" (*unheimlich*). In his study of the architectural uncanny Anthony Vidler describes how "at any moment what seemed on the surface homely and comforting, secure and clear of superstition, might be re-appropriated by something that should have remained secret but that nevertheless, through some chink in the shutters of progress, had returned."[54] Dramatizing a group of monsters, as Le Secq does, or a single chimera as a "character study," as Mieusement often does, confirms the uncanny potential of the photograph: it seems to make these stones spring to life, and it gives them the capacity to become doubles of ourselves—sites of identification. If monuments are ideal homes, the places onto which we project our most intimate desires, the chimeras in these photographs loom ever larger as not only objects but subjects who gaze out of the picture.

Another reason Mieusement was so successful with his photographs of the chimeras is that he sought a range of commercial outlets in museum shops, through the auspices of the Monuments historiques, and eventually via postcards produced by Neurdein Frères, who held the rights to his negatives.[55] By the early twentieth century his images were being reproduced by the thousands in cheap postcards, to be discussed in a later chapter. These were sold just outside the cathedral in the stalls, known as *bouquinistes*, that still straddle the Seine. In one of Mieusement's views of the facade of Notre-Dame taken for the Monuments historiques, the chimeras look down on their own duplication and proliferation—a stall on the quay below has a sign that reads "Achat de livres. Gravures" (fig. 232). Rather than "killing" the cathedral,



232. Séraphin-Médéric Mieusement, view of Notre-Dame with *bouquiniste* stall on the quay, 1892. Albumen paper print from glass negative. MAP CNMHS.

as Hugo had predicted, the book, the printed image, and now the photograph became part of its proliferating, phantasmal existence as a historical monument.

Historians have stressed that it was in the Paris of the Second Empire that photography was first used as a medium of social expression. The modern mass-media society was inaugurated when, to quote Joseph Joubert, artists became "more inspired by the images of objects than by the presence of the objects themselves."[56] It is not by chance that through this medium the chimeras of Notre-Dame should become well-known symbols of Paris, more resonant than any of the hundreds of more venerable statues on fountains and in squares throughout the city. They share something with us—not just the external space of three-dimensionality, but the concomitant notion of an inside, a visceral sensitivity. At the very moment when photography, as the medium of modernity, reduced human beings to purely pictorial signs, flat surfaces, objects that happened to catch the light, the statue (as captured in the photograph) came to represent our mourning at the loss not of the body, but of the soul. Statues are already dead, already still. Perhaps this explains our urge to walk among them and have our pulsing, sensate flesh stopped dead in the lens to become one with them. One late nineteenth-century photograph from the same period as Mieusement's uncanny

233. [Séraphin-Médéric Mieusement?], "Between the Monsters and the Devils." Albumen print. MAP CNMHS.

views of the chimeras, preserved in the Médiatheque de l'architecture, shows a mysterious plump bearded man standing among them. This might be a portrait of Mieusement himself looking in the same direction as the vast one-horned demon but posed much less self-consciously than Le Secq (fig. 233).[57] Another man who looked out from this spot on the balustrade during these years was another devotee of recording the past in the present, deeply concerned with the relationship between inner and outer selves, but he was not a photographer. This was a young Viennese medical student who would forever alter the relationship between outer and inner, statue and self, and who would later describe how the balustrade of Notre-Dame "between the monsters and the devils" was his favorite hangout in Paris. His name was Sigmund Freud.[58]

8. Monsters of Sex

THE GARGOYLES OF GENDER

We went to the Chateau of Pierrefonds, which is Gothic as you know. Madame *** was one of a group of ten or twelve persons, among whom was Marshal X. She asked what was that great sculpted lizard projecting from the roof. She was told that it was a gargoyle.

"What is a gargoyle?" [she asked].

"It is a spout for rejecting water from the roof," [was the reply].

"Really, so much sculpture just for a spout? But that spout there must have cost an enormous amount of money?"

"I know of some that cost even more," said the Marshal in a loud, clear voice.[1]

The association of the female sex and specifically the female sexual organs with the gargoyle is here recounted by the inspector of historical monuments Prosper Mérimée in a letter to his friend Sir Anthony Panizzi, describing a tour he gave to the king of Prussia of the emperor Napoléon III's newly created "medieval" Chateau of Pierrefonds on 23 October 1861. It was his dear friend Viollet-le-Duc's newly designed serpentine spouts that provided the opportunity for the *maréchal's* tasteless joke, recalling the popular misogynistic saying "La femme est un petit trou très cher" (A woman is a very expensive little hole).[2] It was as though, in not recognizing a gargoyle when she saw one, the unfortunate "Madame ***" did not recognize herself. Her ignorance is hardly surprising, considering the exclusive and masculine world of the midcentury French Gothic revival with the phalanx of restorers, *archéologues*, and male monster lovers described in previous chapters. However, this gendering of the neo-Gothic subject was to change in the following decades. It was during the fin de siècle that women first made their appearance among the gargoyles of Notre-Dame, where we can see them both as fascinated subjects beholding monsters and as deformed and dangerous objects becoming them.

A wood-engraved magazine illustration by Georges Stein shows a tightly corseted lady in a large hat leaning on the western balustrade at the base of the north tower, with the Tour Saint-Jacques in the distance (fig. 234). She is accompanied by a man wearing a top hat who looks through his opera glasses at the view. In 1879 an Italian

234. Georges Stein, woman and man on the grand gallery of Notre-Dame, 1890s. Etching. BNF.

tourist, Edmondo de Amicis, and a lady friend climbed to the top of the two towers to see "the monster." This monster was not the demonic statue of the Stryge, but "the monstrous city" (la ville monstreuse), which in its increasing spectacularization came to represent an object of visual consumption for women as well as men, in addition to itself being described as feminine. Paris was a woman.[3] What fed the rapacious monster was a new kind of spectacle, one that extended further than the flaneur's solipsistic male gaze. The restored cathedral and its cast of gargoyles needs to be placed in the context of the Haussmannized city that fascinated writers from Baudelaire to Benjamin, in which the department store window and the wax museum became focal points of a new kind of visual attention. If the balustrade of Notre-Dame first opened as a space for that peculiarly masculine privilege of public life exemplified in the figure of the flaneur, the burgeoning mass culture that made Paris, in T. J. Clark's words, "simply . . . an image" to be looked at and consumed, necessitated the increasing participation of women.[4] Not since the beautiful Gypsy girl Esmeralda had been hidden in one of the towers by her doting hunchback in Hugo's story had the leering Stryge so much female flesh at which to lick his lips. This is a trope which artists and illustrators actually play upon during this period, making the gargoyles into emblems

of the phallic male gaze. But as we shall see, something even more remarkable happens to the chimeras of the cathedral—they become associated with the dangers of specifically female sexuality.

Most guides to Paris, including the many editions of the Baedecker guidebooks, urged tourists to climb the 380 steps to the south tower to gain one of the best views of the city, at least until the Eiffel Tower was completed in 1889. Medical doctrines that held women to be more fragile than men might have suggested that such a climb—in a tight corset that made it difficult to breathe even under normal circumstances—was not advisable. But many women, especially in the more liberated fin de siècle, climbed at least as far as the balustrade. This was a period when women became associated not only with objects of visual pleasure and spectacle, but also with their enthralled subjects. Their rapture was not just in response to the commodities displayed in the great glass windows of the department stores, but often in reponse to more disturbing public spectacles. The Baedecker guide describes another local tourist sight which was thought to have a special fascination for women—the morgue. The couple in the print might have visited it during the same afternoon they climbed the tower. Opened to the public, like Notre-Dame, in 1864, and in its shadows just behind on the quai de l'Archevêché, this spectacle was "one of the most popular sights in Paris." In the calmer days of the Third Republic, when the street violence of the 1870 Commune was a memory, Parisians flocked here. It was open seven days a week from dawn to dusk, sometimes to as many as forty-thousand people a day queued up to see the displayed corpses or body parts of murder victims, suicides, and prostitutes fished out of the Seine and displayed on refrigerated marble slabs behind large glass windows in the "*salle d'exposition*."[5] The ghoulish chimeras had always looked down on death. They had always watched the dying and the dead being trundled in and out of the great death factory that was the hospital of the Hôtel-Dieu directly below. But the morgue presented a monstrous tableau of death more grotesque even than they.

In another view of the balustrade a woman appears alone among the gargoyles. Dressed in black and with a heavy, dark-spotted veil suggesting widowhood or at least mourning, she is squeezed between three of the vast chimeras, the largest being the demon with the goatee, whose associations with phallic power and virility would have been obvious (fig. 235). Even alone she is not really a *flâneuse*, since it has been argued that such a subject was rendered impossible by the sexual divisions of the nineteenth century. Woman was looked at rather than being the bearer of the look.[6] By the 1890s, when this image was produced, the association of woman with the spectacle of Gothic horror narratives, as the seduced victim of vampires as well as the seductive vampire herself, was a commonplace. Rather than stand proudly, defiantly in the context of the infernal menagerie, as do most men shown in this special place,

235. Georges Stein, woman and chimeras, 1890s. Etching. BNF.

the woman here seems dwarfed by the signs of masculinity all around her. She looks away not to gaze upon the city, but because, as I shall argue, as a monster the woman cannot look at herself. Just as the Medusa's head "takes the place of the representation of the female genitals," according to Freud, their apotropaic power makes the spectator stiff with terror and constructs him as male, assuring the spectator that "he is still in possession of a penis, and the stiffening reassures him of the fact."[7] It is because the woman already participates too intimately in the fin-de-siècle scenario of monstrosity that she cannot be represented as interacting with the chimeras as men can. Absorbed by the view beyond, she seems oblivious to the horror that looms up around her in the form of these statues. In the distance is the Eiffel tower, yet another symbol of phallic power, progress and industrialization. It leaves the female stranded in the medieval past, gazing upon a modernity, a phallus she can never possess. My argument might seem strained, if not exaggerated at this point, but once we have reached the end of this chapter and understood the amazing metamorphosis that the cathedral and its monsters underwent in the last decades of the nineteenth century, my terms will seem less strange. Woman—so often essentialized and spectacularized as an object through the very grammatical device of nomination I rehearse here—is transformed into the virgin, the cathedral—Notre Dame herself—but also into the chimera, the monster, and the gargoyle.

236. Léon Gaucherel, "Où Diable l'Amour va-t-il se nicher!" Engraving after a painting by Édouard de Beaumont exhibited in the Salon of 1873. From *Paris à l'eau forte* 2 (November–December 1873): 72. BNF.

1 · *Love among the Gargoyles*

Another female presence among the chimeras of Notre-Dame was a painting by Édouard de Beaumont (1821–88), *Où Diable l'Amour va-t-il se nicher*, exhibited in the Salon of 1873, which gained the artist a second-class medal. Jules Adeline described the painting's popularity at the time and how "the crowd . . . flocked curiously" (la foule . . . se presser curieusement) to see it at the Salon. He also emphasized its risqué nature in juxtaposing a symbol of evil—the Stryge—with the amorous couple, noting that the young girl's "apple-green bodice, agreeably décolleté, adds a clear and vibrant note among the gray stone sculptures."[8] In the same year a print of it by Léon Gaucherel, the engraver who worked for Viollet-le-Duc and who was also a friend of Charles Méryon, appeared in the weekly serial *Paris à l'eau forte, actualité—curiosité—fantasie* (fig. 236). Here the statue is described as a kind of demonic protector

of the couple: "Love is everywhere—a great devil of stone, its cheeks between its large diabolical hands, devilishly sticks out its tongue at the new city for the hidden lovers. . . . Young couples in springtime love such old towers, and the young man repeats tender nothings to his Virginie, or his Marion or his Bovary or his Fantine or his Cosette." A photograph of the painting was also reproduced in *La Galerie contemporaine* in 1884 (where it is described in glowing terms by one critic as a "felicitous and completely new" composition).[9]

Clearly this composition is not new at all. Beaumont was in an ideal position to take up the imaginative task of creating the balustrade's pseudomedievalizing erotic potential, since he had illustrated novels like *Le Diable amoureux* (1845) and Perrotin's superb edition of Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris*, the fiction which had first created this site as a stage for romance. But the painting he exhibited at the Salon was just a slavish copy of Nègre's photograph of 1853, down to the light on the projecting gargoyle and the vertical joints revealed in the stonework that fixes the demon in his place (fig. 215). It is clear that the painter did not even bother to go to the tower of Notre-Dame for himself, since he reproduces exactly the same row of houses in the middle distance of Nègre's photograph, which were in fact demolished before 1866 (see fig. 215). Here we have evidence of the early use of photography to substitute for actual experience and to produce art that is a commodity, bright and shiny with the apparent thrill of "newness" which duplicates an earlier work. The painter's only real addition to Nègre's composition apart from the three birds flying below the lower gargoyle (taken from Méryon) is the pair of lovers.

Their faces are obscured, suggesting secrecy and intrigue in contrast with the open, outward gaze of the two chimeras. The man, who wears no hat, is placed farthest away, with his arm around the waist of the woman. Her neck and shoulders are bare and displayed so that the observer understands she is young and pretty. She nervously fingers a bunch of flowers. There is the suggestion that he is at this moment stealing a kiss or at least making an advance toward her. Their mutual proximity to the stone demon underlines the obvious point of the jokey title of the work, *Where, Devil, Will Love Make Its Nest*. Playing on the incongruity of this place as a site of erotic dalliance, the artist brings the demonic and the erotic together. But the devilish figure who sticks out his tongue and turns his back upon the embracing pair has none of the brooding Baudelairean presence he has in Méryon's or in Nègre's images. Rather, he serves as a cipher of refusal, of prudery—a diabolical disdain at the wiles of masculine ardor. Is the hidden face of the man here articulated in his mirror-double, the demon? What is significant is that only ten years after the cathedral was "finished" the melancholy demon, or at least images of it by Le Secq and Méryon, had come to represent the gaze of male desire. The trope of the balustrade as a place for embracing lovers has, however, continued to be popular, especially in photographs.

Édouard Boubat's *Notre Dame de Paris* (1956) includes no chimeras but makes the embracing couple into the massive sentinels looking out from the balustrade into the bright beyond. That the demon, articulating male desire in Beaumont's crude image, looks away from the church is also significant. Is the young girl being preyed upon here, turning inward toward the cathedral itself, where she is reflected pure and unstained? Viollet-le-Duc's modern cathedral contained certain gargoyles that are disturbingly feminine, as we shall see in the next section—monsters of disease and degradation that he keeps well away from the public view at the west.

The images of women, carved in stone and designed by Viollet-le-Duc that looked down on the parvis from the great west front, are, by contrast, signs of salvation. Two new female statues representing the Church and Synagogue flanked the central portal in niches while in the center of the facade above the gallery of replaced kings stood "Notre Dame" herself, executed in 1854 by Geoffroy-Dechaume.[10] To her left, on the side of the damned in the Judgment Portal below, stands Eve, carved the same year by Jean-Louis Chenillion. Seen from below she appears just as a rather blockish outline, pendant to Adam on the other side. But viewed from a closer position, from the gallery itself, Eve stands in the position of another female viewer looking out over Paris (fig. 237). Totally naked, her body exposed to the west as a flat cipher, her hair streaming back to cover her back, this is a statue carved to intentionally deemphasize female sexuality. The mother of mankind has a large abdomen, however, as if to emphasize the duty of her nineteenth-century daughters to procreate; her hands are clasped in prayer, in humble subservience. Adam opposite is an anodyne, neurasthenic wimp, looking like a syphilitic Victorian male undressing in shame at the doctor's office. Although their smooth bodies reveal no chancres, the threat of venereal disease is projected higher up onto the scaly bodies of the chimeras. In a sense these two statues perfectly enact the shame of the Fall into dangerous but decently depicted sexuality for nineteenth-century men and women. These additions of the etiolated and withdrawn feminine to the west facade were, like the chimeras that loom above, not based on any specific medieval precedents that had survived on the site. There had been life-size statues of Adam and Eve high up on the interior of the South transept—only the sensuous nude Adam survives in the Cluny Museum and is nothing like these sad sentinels of postmedieval corporeality. It was as though Viollet-le-Duc, in restoring the cathedral, had to stamp femininity upon it even more strongly.

As early as 1834 Théophile Gautier's medieval-mad young man, Elias Wildmanstadius, had preferred the cathedral to all women: "The cathedral was a mistress to him, the woman of his thoughts."[11] But by the end of the century these great thirteenth-century architectural structures built for bishops and male canons had become part of the essentialized notion of a spiritualized feminine, both for male and female subjects. In 1888 Zola wrote *Le Rêve* as part of his *Rougon-Macquart* series

237. Jean-Louis Chenillion, Eve, on the lower balustrade of the west facade of Notre-Dame, 1854–55. BNF.

of novels, which focuses on a young girl, Angelique, who lives in the shadow of a great Cathedral of Beaumont, based on Notre-Dame de Paris. "Each morning, she imagined seeing it for the first time, moved by her discovery, understanding that these old stones loved and thought, as she did."[12] The building seems to be alive for this creature, who is especially sensitive, like so many in this period, including Monet, to changes of light and dark playing across the stones of Gothic facades. On rainy days the whole structure seems to spew forth water and be filled with waterfalls and winds, so the edifice becomes another natural form and not a construction at all. But the natural metaphor that Zola uses throughout is not the traditional one of the cathedral as a forest or cliff face, but as a woman. The building is described not only as "the mother, the queen" ruling over the small houses around, but also as having a particularly feminine physiology.[13] She has dark, Romanesque lower parts, the mystery of her hidden primeval sex, here humbled and bent over. Her upper body arches up more elegantly with the lighter, lithe limbs of the Gothic. Above this the pinnacles and flamboyant exuberance of crockets, capitals and "gargoyles, au pied des arcs-boutants" are the most feminine parts of all.[14] These pointed forms are the cathedral's decorated coiffure, ornamenting this beautiful woman more and more as she reaches up to touch the sky. But she also has "an interior existence" (son existence intérieure), a psychology. She is oversensitive, this neurasthenic cathedral, feeling every little rustle pulsing through her veins—the vibrations of ceremonies, the drone of organ music, the murmurs of a low mass, even "the soft kneeling-down of a woman."[15] It is significant that one of the heroine's favorite haunts is the exterior balustrade "bordant la terrasse," described just after the gargoyles, where Angelique communes with "her friend *la cathédrale*."

This gendering of the cathedral as female culminates in Rodin's astonishing description—"C'est une femme adorable, cette cathédrale, c'est une Vierge."[16] It also affected scholarly writing. Émile Mâle's popular syntheses were not only the most influential studies of the symbolism of Gothic art and architecture for the next century; they were also the most anodyne and sanitized, neutralizing any corporeal sexuality. Discussing a thirteenth-century relief of a man and woman, representing the vice of *Luxuria* at Amiens Cathedral, he downplays its sexual suggestiveness in comparison with more explicit twelfth-century images of the subject, which had represented a naked woman whose genitals are bitten by snakes. According to Mâle the Gothic artist worshipped the lady—just as he adored the Virgin Mary—and would "never allow himself to demean her."[17] Mâle's male insistence on the cathedral as a symbol of love which "everyone" worked to build is, like most "medievalizing" discourse at the end of the nineteenth century, oblivious to the actual status of women in medieval culture. Despite the fact that one of the earliest and most popular writers on

Christian iconography in the nineteenth century was the Englishwoman Anna Jameson and that even someone as misogynistic as Joris-Karl Huysmans praised an important French female iconographer, "the most erudite and clear-sighted symbolist of our day, Madame Félicie d'Ayzac," the female spectator of the cathedral was, during this period, reduced to the role of a mute listener.[18] She is the little girl being shown the cathedral by Ruskin on the first pages of *The Bible of Amiens*, which Marcel Proust translated and admired, written for a young English governess to use with her pupils. She is the American Henry Adams's niece visiting Chartres with her Kodak a few decades later, a passive sounding board for his pontifications on the pure female spirit of the Gothic age.[19] This was the period when certain images on the cathedral tours were curtained off or thought not suitable for women, constructing a kind of secret cabinet, like the erotic art of Pompeii that was kept in a locked room at the Naples Museum. Yet the female is constantly being interpolated into the cathedral by the scopic male gaze, sometimes, as we shall see, with explicitly erotic aims—not just as another image to be kissed among the gargoyles, but potentially herself becoming one of the snapping, penis-devouring, yet simultaneously phallic monsters.

II · *Freud, Hysteria, and the Gynecologic Gargoyle*

> The platform of Notre Dame was my favourite resort in Paris; every free afternoon, I used to clamber about there on the towers of the church between the monsters and the devils.
>
> SIGMUND FREUD, *The Interpretation of Dreams*[20]

Sigmund Freud, in Paris for the first time, wrote an enthusiastic letter in 1885 from the Hôtel de la Paix on the edge of the Latin Quarter, where he was staying, to his fiancée's sister Minna Bernays, describing the chimeras of Notre-Dame. He had come to Paris, aged twenty-nine, to study hysteria with the famous Dr. Jean-Martin Charcot, chief physician at the Salpêtrière, the largest medical establishment in the world and the Paris public insane asylum for women. After describing his love of climbing about "between the monsters and the devils," suggesting he had seen the Stryge face-to-face, the young doctor went on to describe the visual impact of the city in terms of a highly gendered symbolic figure—the sphinx: "I am under the full impact of Paris and, waxing very poetical, could compare it to a vast overdressed Sphinx who gobbles up every foreigner unable to solve her riddles. But I will save all this for verbal effusions. Suffice it to say that the city and its inhabitants strike me as uncanny; the people seem to me of a different species from ourselves; I feel they are all possessed of a thousand demons. . . . They are a people given to psychical epidemics, historical

238. Dog-headed woman, Notre-Dame, Paris (no. 37). (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

239. Cow-headed woman and goat chimeras, Notre-Dame, Paris (nos. 32 and 33). Late nineteenth-century photograph.

240. Cow-headed woman looking east (no. 32). Old photo from postcard.

241. Olivier Merson, illustration from Alfred Barbou, *Victor Hugo et son Temps* (Paris, 1886)

mass convulsions, and they haven't changed since Victor Hugo wrote *Notre-Dame*. To understand Paris this is the novel you must read; although everything in it is fiction, one is convinced of its truth."[21] Freud also described the inhabitants without shame, "women no less than the men," who clamored to see spectacles of nudity as much as "corpses in the morgue." But most interesting of all, he saw the manic and convulsive inhabitants of the city in terms of Hugo's Gothic novel, comparing the contorted features of gargoyles to the disturbed mental states of people he saw on the streets. It was as though Freud saw in the "demons" he so admired on the balustrade

the same demons that possessed his patients. But, even more significantly, in referring to the city as a female monster and in particular as a sphinx, Freud was invoking a particularly feminine type of mental disease—that which three years earlier Charcot himself in his inaugural lecture at the Institut de France, had described: "Hysteria had for so long offered itself as a kind of sphinx," a monstrous hybrid of a disease, one that in an age obsessed with taxonomies of classification, defied classification.[22]

Some of Viollet-le-Duc's original designs for the chimeras are clearly female, although these appear significantly on the eastern side of the towers, facing away from the more public western parvis. On the back of the south tower two of the beasts have large, pendulous breasts. The first of these figures on the northeast corner has enormous elbows and a thick, curving neck that terminates in a smirking, snub-nosed dog-head (no. 37; fig. 238). The second, on the southern corner toward the Seine, is placed between the goat and the squatting ape and is similar, except that she turns more acutely to one side and her hands, with knuckles big as a bricklayer's, relax on the edge of the balustrade (no. 32; fig. 239). She has been referred to as Isis, but photographs of her taken from the other side reveal more refined features, more human than animal, with a snout and two small horns, making her almost the female of the same species that produced the Stryge (fig. 240). The powerful force of this figure on the Paris skyline was suggested by one of the illustrators of a later edition of Victor Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris*, Olivier Merson, who created a dramatic scene of Quasimodo clambering among the gargoyles on the back of the south tower, watched over by this brooding female figure (fig. 241).

That such extremes of ugliness and grotesquerie were incorporated into the female body is not surprising, considering the vogue for caricatures of women in the 1840s and 1850s (fig. 242). But grimacing harridans, bestial bourgeoises like those in the popular *Physiologies*, would have an altogether different charge at the century's end. A new and more scientifically authorized antifeminism transformed the balustrade of the cathedral into a theater of female depravity linked to sexual rather than social distinctions. One of France's leading medical experts who presided over the celebrated trial of the mass murderer Joseph Vacher argued that "the sadist has something of the cerebral licentiousness of the woman."[23] Doctors maintained that the "new woman" was dangerous because she was obsessed with enlarging her brain at the expense of her uterus, becoming sexless and unable to reproduce. In contrast to the Virgin and the pot-bellied Eve of the west front, these female figures that turn away are barren. Lacking lower bodies, these female chimeras became projects of this late nineteenth-century fear of women who did not submit to male authority through the channels of reproduction. In the Middle Ages the pregnant female body was often associated with the monster, but this was unthinkable in the nineteenth

242. Jules Platiér, "Insolence." From *Sensations et Physiognomies*, 1842. Lithograph. BNF.

century, when the dangerous growths were muscular ones.[24] What makes these two figures especially striking is their strong attention. A number of commentators of the period describe the uncanny form of the chimeras, their grimaces, and their postures in ways that suggest analogies with new forms of what were seen as particularly feminized spectacles in the city. The most important of these was, of course, the box or balcony of a theater, which the beasts on the balustrade have always evoked.[25] An Italian visitor to the city remarked not only that Paris was an essentially feminine city ("En fait Paris est une ville feminine") but also that "in this city, each becomes at the same time, spectator and actor."[26]

If physiognomic science had been one of the major sources for Viollet-le-Duc's creation of female gargoyles, by the 1880s the burgeoning science of psychology was altering how people viewed monstrosity. Freud clearly described the monsters and demons, just as he viewed the Paris crowds far below, as exhibiting all the symptoms of the affliction he had come to Paris to study under Charcot—hysteria. Popular notions of the disorder had not changed in a thousand years. It was still a women's disease, linked to unsatisfied female desires and synonymous with nymphomania. Hysteria was also seen as a peculiarly Parisian disease, and in France, unlike in the rest of Europe, it predominantly affected working-class women. In 1859 Paul Briquet estimated that one-quarter of poor women in Paris were afflicted with the disorder.[27] Freud had come to Paris to see a particular kind of spectacle—that performed by Charcot and his patients in his famous clinical lessons at the Salpêtrière. Charcot described the hospital as "a sort of museum, with considerable resources" in which the works of art on display were his patients. A connoisseur of every tic and convulsion, he described hysteria as happening in four stages or periods: (1) tonic rigidity; (2) clonic spasms or "grands mouvements"; (3) "attitudes passionelles" or vivid emotional representations; and (4) final delirium marked by sobs, tears, and laughter and the return to the real world.[28] The first period began with the involuntary gaping open of the mouth and the violent twisting of the head and neck. Especially from the parvis below some of the chimeras, like the Isis figure, appear to exhibit some of the same convulsive agitation of the patients in the *Iconographie photographique de Salpêtrière*, an annual publication directed by Charcot that first appeared in 1876. This collection of photographs, which Freud knew, certainly included faces as distorted in pain and intense psychic conflict as any of the statues of Notre-Dame. Charcot used photography to turn his patients into manipulable, readable objects, divisible into various stages and collected in albums that were clearly used by the doctors to control hysterics and, some have argued, by the hysterics to please their doctors. The demoniacal variety of poses assumed by persons in the "second period" of hysteria included hideous and violent contortions which made the patient appear to be a "wild

243. Cat-headed figure sticking out tongue, Notre-Dame, Paris (no. 39).

244. "Contracture de la langue provoquée a l'état de veille chez une hystérique par réflexe auriculaire." From Charles Laufenauer, "Des contractures spontanées et provoquées de la langue chez les hyséro-épileptiques," *Nouvelle iconographie photographique de la Salpêtrière*, vol. 2 (1889), pl. 33. (Photo: author.)

beast" possessed of the devil. This was the stage when doctors were shocked to see remarkable gender infringement, when these women seemed to regress to an earlier undifferentiated state of development, becoming nonwomen or even virile in their aggressiveness. The masculine-feminine monsters of the balustrade, snarling and twisting their heads, would have evoked for the young Freud exactly what he would have seen in the exhibitions performed at the Salpêtrière.[29] Even more significant, the "attitudes passionelles" of the third period involved the body's freezing into a statue-like rigidity, in which the patient would remain for hours or even days motionless and absorbed in a silent contemplation. Not only the Stryge, but also another chimera very visible on the inner side of the balustrade to tourists visiting the space, which sticks out its enormous tongue sideways (no. 39; fig. 243), would have appeared in a new psychiatric light to those who knew the medical iconography of the protruding tongue as a sign of "hémispasme glosso-labié hystérique," vividly illustrated in the *Nouvelle iconographie photographique de la Salpêtrière* of 1889 (fig. 244).[30]

If Charcot constructed the visual iconography of the hysterical attack, he did so not only from his own observations of patients but also through reference to and manipulation of images from the past. He had been the first to see a relationship

between hysteria and the repressive aspects of medieval Catholicism, such as witch hunts, as part of his own political campaign to wrest control of hospitals from the church. In 1887 he published a book, *Les Démoniaques dans l'art*, which sought to show how earlier paintings of supernatural possession and convulsion (usually being cured by miracle-performing saints) were in fact detailed and careful renderings of nervous diseases only later understood to be attacks of hysteria. Freud, a Jew, was influenced by his teacher's interest in Catholicism and brought his psychological analysis of medieval culture to bear on his developing conception of hysterical repression and defense as well as on the relationship between hysteria and sexuality. In 1886, after returning to Vienna, he wrote that in recent times "a hysterical woman would have been almost as certain to be treated as a malingerer, as in earlier centuries she would have been certain to be judged and condemned as a witch or as possessed of the devil."[31] Two years later Freud wrote an article in which he elaborated upon the link between medieval culture and hysteria: "In the Middle Ages neuroses played a significant part in the history of civilization, they appeared in epidemics as a result of psychical contagion, and were at the root of what was factual in the history of possession and witchcraft. Documents from that period prove that the symptomology has undergone no change to the present day." Later, when he sent a series of notes to Wilhelm Flies's in 1897 summarizing his ideas on this neurotic disorder, he called it, significantly, "The Architecture of Hysteria" and recalled not only the Gothic structures he had seen in Nuremberg but also his earlier trip to Paris, where he had admired the lectures of Charcot so much that he had come out of them "as from out of Notre Dame, with an entirely new idea about perfection."[32] Charcot's lectures, where patients were routinely displayed to perform their neurosis as they did for the camera, revealed truths in clear, visual terms just like the images of the great cathedral.

Another of Charcot's followers, Dr. Paul Richer, after publishing studies of hysteria, turned his focus to the visual arts. In his general overview of the subject, *L'Art et la médicine*, published in 1902, he included in the second chapter a photograph of the Stryge, labeled simply "Diable."[33] He argues in this chapter, which is entitled "Les Grotesques," that certain distorted faces found in medieval sculptures, such as a twisted mouth of a mascaron at the church of Santa Maria Formosa in Venice, "which Professor Charcot had remarked on during one of his travels," as well as the famous masks carved at the Cathedral of Reims, can be compared directly to the convulsions of the "facial spasm . . . localized on one side of the face" in hysterical patients of the Salpêtrière.[34] By comparison, Richer notes how "one of the devils of the towers of Notre-Dame sticks out a straight and pointed tongue" as a sign of mockery, and even of "lust and gluttony."[35] More than a gesture, the demon's leer is associated with

the involuntary spasms of mental affliction, in which "the tongue sticking out of the mouth" (la langue sortie de la bouche) takes on a significantly sexual and gendered set of associations. Another popular medico-art-historical expert, Dr. Augustin Cabanès, described how "to the eyes of a doctor, these grotesque beasts, these devouring chimeras, these unreal monsters" are realistically observed portraits of "hysterics with contracted faces and twisted lolling tongues and degenerates suffering from labio-glosso-laryngial hemispasms."[36]

This aspect of the reception of the chimeras in the late nineteenth century is part of a wider interest on the part of the medical profession in the monstrous. French doctors—described by Elisabeth Roudinesco as the greatest "voyeurs" of the period, both of real bodies and of art—viewed themselves as heroes of the new age; girded with new scientific and social standing in the wake of positivism, members of the medical professional—all male—gained a prestige in Parisian society that made it possible for them to talk about anything with authority—medieval art included.[37] It is remarkable how many articles on gargoyles appeared in the pages of popular medical journals like the *Chronique medicale* in the years around 1900, as doctors and medical students began looking at the sculpted stones vomiting and squirming in pain on their local churches as possible patients. As the doctor's diagnosis, especially of aberration, became one of the verifiers in a world of would-be progress and positivist fantasy, the most famous of these medical iconographers was Gustave-Joseph Witkowski (1844–1920). A respected gynecologist and professor of medicine at the Faculty of Paris, he authored a series of widely used and superbly illustrated chromolithographic volumes on the anatomy of the male and female genitalia entitled *Anatomie iconoclastique* (1874). Slices of the female body could be removed using a series of movable flaps and slots, revealing a labyrinthine interior of levels and vaulted proportions (fig. 245). Each minutely detailed organ was numbered and labeled with the name of the male doctor who had made the expedition and affixed his identity to this landscape: the "(no. 101) muscle de Wilson," the "(no. 96) Glande de Cowper." There is even a mythological dimension to this torso cut open, the "mont de Venus," corresponding to what in the male genital diagram is just the abdomen, as well as the "(no. 82) languette," revealing an interior version of the organ of dangerous excess, both in speech and in hysterical convulsion.[38] This was the landscape that Witkowski spent the rest of his career exploring, labeling not the interior of womens' bodies but their representation in art history. In 1908 Witkowski published his most influential work, a large, two-volume study of obscene images in ecclesiastical art, *L'Art profane à l'église, ses licenses symboliques, satiriques et fantaisistes*. Following Viollet-le-Duc in viewing the cathedrals as sites of freedom of speech and rational inquiry, Witkowski created a gazetteer organized according to country and region, containing hundreds

245. G.-J. Witkowski, "Organes génitaux et périnée de la femme." From *Anatomie iconoclastique* (Paris, 1874).

of woodblock illustrations of a wide range of medieval sculptures from the exterior and interior of churches, all with what he argued was explicit sexual content. The history of art for Witkowski was a vast stone clinic where he had the powers to diagnose a thousand years of bodily function and dysfunction in the forms of overblown phalli, trumpeting anuses, and squirting breasts.

Witkowski's iconographic diagnoses more often focus on one particularly phantasmal part of the fin-de-siècle female anatomy—the bosom. There is a fetishistic fascination with the curvaceous form created not by nature, but by the contraption that he had written a whole book about and that shaped the female body for the male gaze—the corset. A year after Witkowski published *L'Art profane à l'église* he produced a volume on the female nude in the theater, concluding as part of a complaint that the French were becoming more and more prudish, and arguing that the nude female body was the most ideal form in nature and had been used for centuries by man to evoke poetry and the ideal. A section called "Le Décolletage dans la salle" contains a woodcut of ladies revealing their bosoms from the theater box (fig. 246).[39] This is close to the rendering of the cow-faced chimera at Notre-Dame which the same author discusses in his *L'Art profane à l'église* (fig. 247). In this latter work not only does he describe the two female chimeras as being "munis de mamelles," but these and others are also described as "décolletées" either at the front or from behind.[40] The way the statue is represented in Witkowski's illustration, with its head turned away, is suggestive not of the peering inquisitiveness of the original but of a withdrawn, shy creature. The wood-engraved illustration was directly based upon photographs sold by the Monuments historiques (fig. 239), but the breasts are given a more curvaceous shape, naturalizing what is monstrously sharp in the stone original. Just as the actual diagnoses at the Salpêtrière depended upon the record of photography, these iconographic researches were based on the encyclopedic possibilities of the medium. Part of the problem with Witkowski and the medical iconographers' view of medieval art is that they were being far too literal, when they were in fact dealing with images which performed on a number of symbolic levels. This positivist and highly anachronistic tradition of seeing the monstrous forms of medieval ecclesiastical sculpture as exhibits in a hospital of actual anomalies, birth defects, and freaks continues, particularly in France, even today.[41]

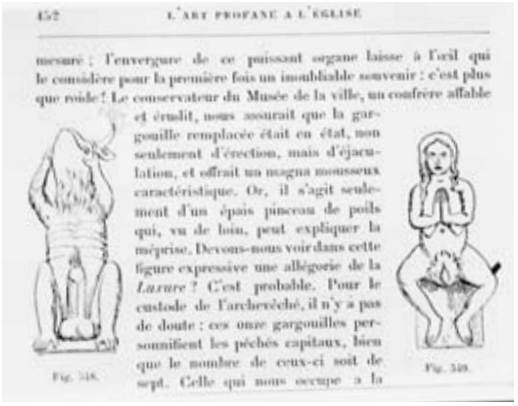
The vast hands of this creature in Witkowski's book suggest female bodies that have been transformed into muscular half males. This monster lady is not only corsetless, she is brazenly masculine in her strong gaze, looking around rather than down, an inquiring monster that seeks to move from its assigned place. The falling birthrate in France and the defeat by Germany in 1870 were frequently attributed to frigidity and impotence resulting from the blurring of gender distinctions, the rise of

246. G.-J. Witkowski, "Loge d'opéra." From *Le Nu au théâtre depuis l'antiquité jusqu'à nos jours*, 1909.

247. G.-J. Witkowski, the cow-faced chimera. From *L'Art profane à l'église* (Paris, 1908), 1:37.

the "new woman." The female monster represents, in a way, the symbolic and generative power of monstrosity itself, and particularly of a monstrosity linked to femininity, female sexuality, and female powers of reproduction, a source of both fear and anxiety. In his *La Génération humaine*, which was reprinted seven times between 1881 and 1888, Witkowski had been one of the earliest to publicize female homosexuality, which he discussed under the sexual abuses that were "against nature"—"onanism, bestiality . . . pederasty and lesbianism" (onanisme, bestialité . . . pederastie et la tribadie)—all of which he believed were caused by an excess of "venereal appetite" (l'appetit vénérien).[42] Thus, as Witkowski's art-historical researches tended to reveal the particularly female forms he found among the half-hidden statues of the cathedrals, all three sexual perversions that he feared were rampant in his own epoch—masturbation, bestiality, and homosexuality of both sexes—were feminized as products of sexual appetite.

It is the more animal of the beasts of the balustrade that exhibit reproductive organs, the great, many-teated cow with her vast haunches, the crouching dog. The human monsters are cut off at the waist, this lack only serving to emphasize even more starkly the phallus that does not appear. Because the chimeras of Notre-Dame lacked lower bodies, Witkowski could not show off his gynecologic knowledge, as he does elsewhere in his book, discussing the thirteenth-century gargoyles from the bishop's palace at Sens. He reproduces two of the most audacious. The first is a goat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mesure : l'envergure de ce puissant organe laisse à l'œil qui le considère pour la première fois un inoubliable souvenir : c'est plus que roide ! Le conservateur du Musée de la ville, un confrère affable et érudit, nous assurait que la gargouille remplacée était en état, non seulement d'érection, mais d'éjaculation, et offrait un magna mousseux caractéristique. Or, il s'agit seulement d'un épais pinceau de poils qui, vu de loin, peut expliquer la méprise. Devons-nous voir dans cette figure expressive une allégorie de la *Luxure* ? C'est probable. Pour le custode de l'archevêché, il n'y a pas de doute : ces onze gargouilles personnifient les péchés capitaux, bien que le nombre de ceux-ci soit de sept. Celle qui nous occupe a la

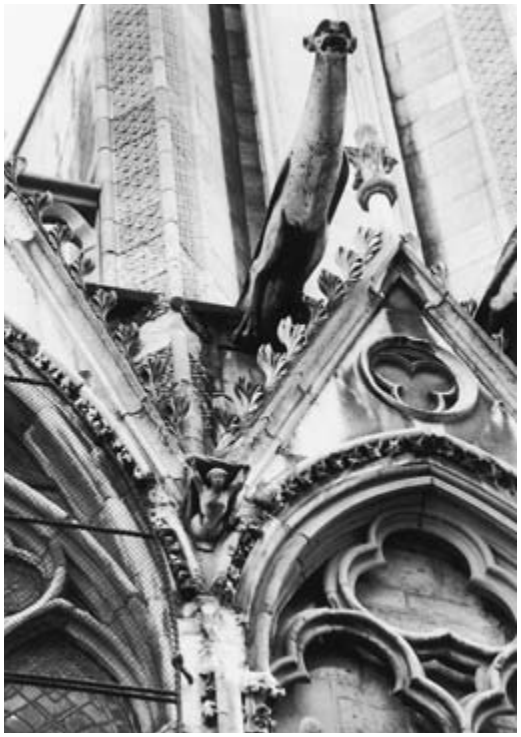
Fig. 348. Fig. 349.

248. G.-J. Witkowski, gargoyles from the Palais synodal, Sens. From *L'Art profane à l'église* (Paris, 1908), 1:452.

with a great phallus, which he describes as exhibiting not only an erection but also ejaculation. The second, which is reproduced as though it were one of his patients, except that her hands are brought together in prayer, is a woman with her legs spread wide apart (fig. 248). Such an image could only be printed because it was considered a historical work of art, a gargoyle from centuries past. But these gargoyles had in fact been restored more recently, by none other than Viollet-le-Duc. Witkowski reproduces them from the much-damaged original statues which had been removed from the building in 1851.[43] Witkowski makes the important point that in replacing these gargoyles the restorer had "recoiled from reproducing such realism" and dared not include the explicit detail of the woman whose vulva was, as Witkowski notes, painted bright red. This and another gargoyle of a woman that the gynecologist interprets as in the process of giving birth were not replaced in Viollet-le-Duc's scheme—a clear example of where nineteenth-century restorers censored what was considered obscene. Witkowski revels in the hypocrisy of the "archéologues chrétiennes" and argues that such images should be be viewed scientifically, dispassionately, and objectively, when in fact his own text and illustrations serve to fetishistically dismember and reduce everything to the sexual organs.

When one looks at his *Autobiography*, published in 1917, the psychological roots of Witkowski's obsessions become all too clear. Here, alongside his designs for a new type of chair "in the Renaissance style" for undertaking gynecological examinations and for a new form of *speculum*, the doctor confesses, "As for our happy intransigent misogyny, it is the natural consequence of our happy misanthropy and also of relationships, worldly and otherwise, that we have had with the sex which spends its time weaving and unweaving the tangled thread of man's life, the thread which the Fates have the aim of cutting. We have many times cut open the brain and the heart of that sex deprived of view and reason. In the first we found nothing but emptiness—

249. Female gargoyle designed by Viollet-le-Duc, south side of Notre-Dame, Paris. (Photo: Stuart Michaels.)



250. Gargoyle and female figure revealing herself: restorations by Viollet-le-Duc on the north transept, Notre-Dame, Paris. (Photo: Stuart Michaels.)

although nature was horrified by it—and wormy tapestry in the folds of the other confirm this realistic but little-known distich: 'If in the heart of man a vile pig sleeps, in the heart of woman is an old viper.' Is this not the corollary of the psalmist's maxim 'Guard yourself against woman; sooner or later she will betray you.'"[44] Here Witkowski, for all his claims to represent a modern, anticlerical rationality, betrays a fundamental affinity with the most extreme forms taken by medieval monastic misogyny. It could even be argued that images of women created by medieval artists come nowhere close to his fervidly forensic mixture of fear and fascination.

Viollet-le-Duc added one prominent female gargoyle to the south side of the nave, now much eroded (fig. 249). She represents a fully clothed woman with a wimple and a vast open mouth and is recorded in a drawing of April 1854.[45] Also oddly clothed is the voluptuous girl on the north transept, who reveals herself to the viewer (to be not naked) from under a cloth, below a projecting gargoyle (fig. 250). Forty years after it was created her gesture would have a different set of associations, once the

unveiling of women's bodies had come under the gynecologic gaze of medicine. As Ludmilla Jordanova has shown, sculptures like *Nature Unveiling Herself before Science*, by Louis Ernest Barrias, associate the veil with the hymen of chastity and its removal by the phallic penetrative gaze of male science.[46] Viollet-le-Duc's little image is of a female exhibitionist, which was a new symptom of degeneracy being studied in Paris for the first time, but only as a male disorder.[47] Freud himself described the erotic life of women as "veiled in impenetrable obscurity."

The balustrade of Notre-Dame thus became at the end of the nineteenth century a sort of clinic. Freud, who was to transform Charcot's theories into the most powerful model of human behavior for modern times, learned not only from his teacher's hysterical theater in the flesh but also from wandering among the chimeras. Why did he feel so "at home" there? Was it to do with the concept he would later himself formulate, linking the uncanny or "unhomely" with the female body? Precisely because they lacked lower bodies, in Freud's sense, the stone faces of the two female chimeras could perform as the "genitalized head" of Medusa, an upward displacement of the lower body so that the snarling mouth represents the *vagina dentata*. As Freud later described: "To decapitate = to castrate. The terror of Medusa is thus a terror of castration that is linked to the sight of something."[48] By the end of the century the medical community had moved away from physiognomy and toward psychopathology. Theories of deviation and degeneration were used far more generally in a society that sought a symptomology, whether it be hysteria or abnormality of another sort, that could measure monstrosity against the normative, not only with the living but with the long dead and always dead stones of the cathedrals. The monstrous became a sign of dangerous anomalies and diseases, the domain of the powerful new discourses of the doctor and the psychiatrist.[49] Not everyone agreed. Huysmans was to discard the gaze of modern medicine and the promise of science for his own peculiar brand of medievalizing mysticism. In his novel of the occult, *Là-bas* (1891), his hero closes his discussion of that cathedral of contortions and convulsions etched in flesh, the Hospital of the Salpêtrière, with the contention "There remains this unanswerable question: is a woman possessed because she is hysterical, or is she hysterical because she is possessed? Only the church can answer. Science cannot."[50]

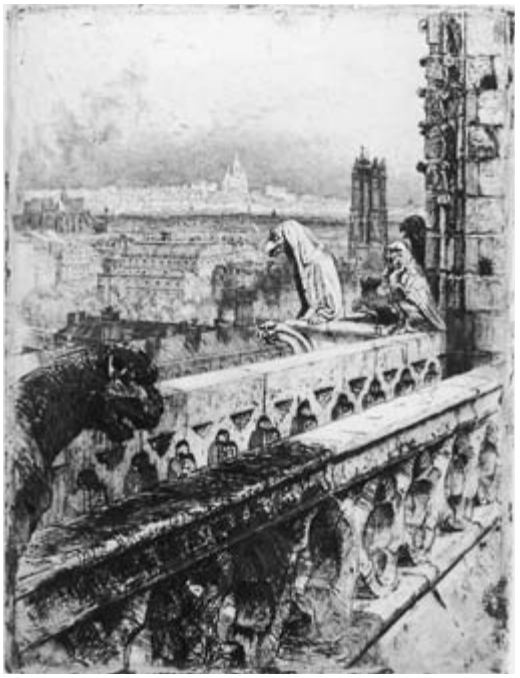
III · *Huysmans's Chimera: The Cathedral as Whore*

Joris-Karl Huysmans (1848–1907) is a crucial figure for understanding the simultaneous attraction and repulsion of the monstrous feminine in the fin de siècle. In his later work he does not so much reject the flamboyant decadence of his early novels like *À rebours* (1884) as incorporate it into his mystical medievalism, creating his own "psy-

chology of the cathedral," which, he complained, had been "so entirely overlooked since medieval times by those professors of monumental physiology called archeologists and architects."[51] For the devout dandy his preferred object of desire was "Our Lady of Chartres" who remained inviolate and distant. By contrast, sitting in the center of the city, blackened by sin and sexual excess, Notre-Dame de Paris was, in Huysmans's view, an old whore who had been worn down not just by time and decay but who had suffered the further indignity of being raped by restoration.

In his *Certains*, published in 1887, alongside essays on Moreau, Degas, and Félicien Rops, Huysmans included "Le Monstre," in which he discusses the chimeras of Notre-Dame at length. He saw these as exemplifying the modern artist's failure to create convincing monstrosity. In his essay on Rops, Huysmans admired the artist's ability to play between "good and evil, . . . God and the devil, between purity . . . and voluptuousness," but he was quite negative about the demons of Notre-Dame, finding them inadequate on a number of grounds.[52] His essay opened with the categorical statement "The monster in art really does not exist or, rather, no longer exists for us at this moment."[53] A few pages later he added:

> The band of monsters which encircles Notre-Dame de Paris proves this. Here are extravagant birds perched on the Saxon flora of stone balconies. The Stymphalides of Greek myth—who borrow from the hard suppleness of steel and iron the arrows of their feathers, the shears of their beaks, the nails of their claws—live again in these sculptures, less menacing and less grim. Enlivened by the shawls of old women and the hoods of monks, they grip with their pincers the rostrum of frills covered with scales, and gape, without hostility, their wings folded, very tired. Then they move away from the ancestral type, they are transformed into gigantic parakeets grafted together from vultures and cockerells, into these fabulous fowl walking about with the paws of lions and snow leopards, bristling with feathers cut to a short mesh which resemble the overlapping links of the mail surcoat of the old Gauls and the raised scales of fish that one scrapes.
>
> These birds alternate with a whole menagerie of beasts whose forms remain intact, such as the cow, the elephant, the pelican, and the eagle who accompany the groups of demons and monsters: the bitches with two heads, with the breasts of wet nurses and the feet of cats; the rams with wrestlers' arms terminating with talons curled like boat hooks; buffaloes with hairless chests on which rattle the dugs of emaciated women; griffins with eyes sleepy and deceptive and with the teeth of walruses; beasts with the bellies and hands of men; hairy-chested goats surmounted by faces with the profiles of camels, with elk's horns, with rounded eyes, with feet bifurcated between those of storks and nanny goats.



251. Charles Jouas, *De la Tour Saint-Jacques à Saint-Eustache*, 1905. Etching. BNF.

> Unfortunately, if the individual words suggested by these sculptures remain fairly clear, the meaning of the phrases that might appear in the extraordinary written page of Notre-Dame remains forever lost.[54]

In its emphasis on the textures of the stone Huysmans's description is typical of his obsession with the pathology of surface. This was partly in response to the physical decay of the cathedral itself in the smoke of industrial Paris, visible in contemporary etchings by Charles Jouas, which also emphasize the chimeras as crumbling away (fig. 251). Huysmans has been called a "specialist in skin diseases . . . a dermatologist who can never stop detailing the lamentable state of innumerable membranes of all kinds." But this skin and the whole stone fabric of the church is gendered. Charles Bernheimer has described how from his first book to his last Huysmans "never stops detailing the ontological consequences of the exorbitant female wound as it corrupts, infects, rots, and decomposes the real."[55] "It all comes down to syphilis," or "everything is but syphilis" (Tout est que syphilis), he announced in *À rebours*, and even the statues of Notre-Dame are infected by the disease that claimed five thousand new cases every year, according to doctors.[56] The putrefying countenance of the prostitute was, for this writer, inscribed on the female chimeras of the cathedral as their stones darkened, crumbled, and rotted away.

Huysmans goes on to argue for the indecipherability of these creatures according to the tenets of Christian symbolism, which can no longer have any meaning for moderns who have ingested the "theories of Moritz Wagner and Darwin."[57] Individually they might make sense, but as a group they are incoherent. The vulture, considered by the Egyptians an emblem of maternity, signifies the cruel rapacity of the demon for Christians, so which is the case here? The pelican, a symbol of the Savior's sacrifice, nourishing its young with its own blood, is a fine emblem, but what is it doing among the evil creatures here? Often these creatures "lose the quality that is proper to them" (perdent la qualité qui leur est propre). So confused are the "fantastic statues which surround the towers of Notre-Dame" (les fantastiques statues qui cernent les tours de Notre-Dame) that Christian iconographers have given up, and only alchemists seeking the philosopher's stone are interested in deciphering the cathedral's "inexplicable text" (l'inexpicable texte).[58] Today's monsters, he argues, are not to be found in these vast stone cattle but under the microscope and in the art of symbolist painters like Odilon Redon who evoke the horror of the "regions of the imperceptible" (districts des imperceptibles).[59] Huysmans's anxiety once again is with infection and venereal disease. "Leaning for five centuries above the enormous city which ignores them, they contemplate ceaselessly the unchanging foundation of human folly. They follow across the ages the exploits of the old man obsessed by carnal cares and the lure of gain; they sniff an exhalation of everlasting vices; they survey the rise of old sins; they verify the low water mark of the eternal filth that pampers the hypocritical garbage dump of these soft times. Sentinels placed at forgotten posts on thresholds lost in the beyond of winds, they execute an unknown order in a dead language. They sneer, gnash their teeth, and snarl, without pity for the frightful distress that nevertheless cries out under their feet in the sorrowful beds of the nearby hospitals."[60]

A decade later, Huysmans made love to his darling Chartres in *La Cathédrale* (1898) and described by contrast the Parisian basilica even more critically as "almost elephantine," "patched up and done up from top to bottom; its sculptures are touched up when they are not entirely modern," and, worst of all, filled with horrible tourists, most especially "those ill-bred visitors from London that I have seen, speaking at the top of their voice, resting, in defiance of the simplest customs, seated before the altar even when the Holy Sacrament was being blessed in front of them."[61] With its two massive towers it seems "crushed, as it were, by the burden of sins, dragged down to earth by the wickedness of the city."[62]

In this novel about Chartres, Huysmans presents a dual vision of his beloved cathedral in the dialogue between the rational, historical, and erudite abbé Plomb and the passionate, idealizing Durtal. This young man's urge to understand the "chimeri-

cal trauma" of the cathedrals has him researching the meaning of mythological creatures like the dragon and griffin, reading Berger de Xivrey's *Traditions tératologique*, and dismissing "the Abbé Auber's work on the subject" as "a delusion."[63] In his urge to transfigure the stones into something like pure poetry, ideal and untainted, Durtal is rather dismissive of gargoyles, which are always pulling him down to earth. He maintains that these "hybrid monsters signifying the vomiting forth of sin ejected from the sanctuary . . . [are] not particularly interesting, since these monsters—the wyvern, the manticoris, leoncerote, the tharanda and sea-monk—all mean the same thing, and all embody the spirit of evil."[64] The abbé Plomb, who, like Émile Mâle and many others since, takes the metaphor of the cathedral as a "Bible in stone" all too literally, warns Durtal not to get misled by arcane interpretations of bestiaries and modern mythmakers, and that many of the monstrous progeny of the cathedral are a result of grammatical errors in translation: "The lamia, a vampire, half woman and half serpent like the wyvern, is a night bird, the white or the screech owl; the satyrs and fauns, the hairy beasts spoken of in the Vulgate, are, after all, no more than wild goats—'schirim,' as they are called in the Mosaic original."[65]

In chapter 9 of his most famous novel, *À rebours*, or *Against the Grain*, Huysmans had his decadent hero Jean Des Esseintes plunge into a series of excesses stimulated by art, ending with a "mistrustful friendship" with a "petit Jesus," or male prostitute, and beginning with his seduction of a female ventriloquist: "One night, he had a miniature sphinx brought in, carved in black marble, couched in the classic pose with outstretched paws and the head held rigid and upright together with a chimæra, in coloured earthenware, flourishing a bristling mane, darting savage glances from ferocious eyes, lashing into furrows with its tail its flanks swollen like the bellows of a forge. He placed these monsters, one at each end of the room, put out the lamps."[66] Stretching out beside his mistress, Des Esseintes has her perform her much-rehearsed act, based on the episode of the meeting of the two monsters in Flaubert's *Tentation de Saint Antoine*, a "wondrous dialogue of the Chimera and the Sphinx, spoken in deep, guttural tones, now hoarse, now shrill, like voices of another world." This episode, in which a woman's disembodied voice is illusionistically produced from within the mouths of two monsters, epitomizes Huysmans's disgust with and desire for the feminine as obsessive ornament surrounding an empty void, but the feared object that is made to speak is clearly the vagina. For example, in writing to a friend about how to frame an erotic poem, he suggests that "with framing devices, flourishes, and tailpieces . . . and bright reds like a new clitoris, one would have something unexpected and quite curious."[67] Yet it was this projection of fantasy onto the frame and avoidance of the center which Henri Mayeux, one of the most popular aestheticians of the fin de siècle, criticized in the art of the period: "How many times does one not see, in

architecture as well as in furniture, painting or bronzes, an assemblage of decorative accessories, an ornate frame bordered by figures, chimera . . . merely serve to valorize . . . an empty medallion."[68] It is exactly this void at the center of things, the gaping hole of sex, that Huysmans replaced with God in his later writings, and that made him increasingly suspicious of everything clinging or growing at its edge.

Huysmans wrote about Notre-Dame again in a book published in 1905 with engravings by Charles Jouas, *Le Quartier Notre-Dame*. The author's liking for the metropolitan cathedral had not increased very much in the twenty years since he had written "Le Monstre." He describes the cathedral as nothing compared to his beloved Chartres, and as regards Parisian churches he prefers smaller ones like Saint-Severin. Moreover, what makes Notre-Dame a less spiritual cathedral is the fact that it has been restored. The west front comes under attack, for example, as "entirely remade" with "statues produced by the gross" (statues fabriquée à la grosse). Like Proust, who also bemoaned what he called "faulty restorations," Huysmans prefers the memory and the ruin. He describes Viollet-le-Duc "rejuvenating" the exterior, in the way an old woman has cosmetic surgery, scraping away the epidermis and thus removing the patina of old stone. What is ultimately removed by restoration is its sacral aura, its "halo of incense."[69]

252. Charles Jouas, gargoyles in the rain. From Joris-Karl Huysmans, *Le Quartier Notre-Dame* (Paris, 1905). BNF.

The integration of words and images in this little volume is also suggestive of the physical coldness, the frigidity that Huysmans sees in what he calls the "basilique hivernale." The frontispiece shows a woman in a winter muff standing and shivering on the balustrade. Crows fly, but there are no chimeras. Other full-page illustrations show the cathedral in the midst of wind and rain, the gargoyles spurting forth their water and the bird chimeras pelted with hail (fig. 252). On another page, a detail of the head of the lion-man chimera has three birds resting upon the head as if to emphasize in the indignity the unlifelikeness of this visage. Huysmans, who in his earlier novel about Chartres, *La Cathédrale* (1898), attempted to celebrate the vivacity of medieval architecture in fin-de-siècle France, had described Notre-Dame as a dreary cathedral of death. This fashion for showing Notre-Dame under different climatic conditions (as in the work of Monet, an "impressionist" vision of the chimeras) had been popularized in the previous decade in woodcuts and engravings by Auguste Lepère. His "Le Stryge de Notre Dame: Flecons de neige qui tombe" was published in the woman's journal *Harper's Magazine* in 1890. Another magazine, *Le Tour de France*, had a special issue on the cathedral in April 1905 with an essay by Huysmans and color reproductions of works by Charles Jouas including *Notre-Dame under Snow*. Jouas was another expert in suggesting the effects of snow and rain upon stone, and his views are all wintry.[70] Huysmans was not interested in the aesthetics of frigidity only as an atmospheric trait. For him this cathedral was, even without ice

253. Charles Jouas, Notre-Dame gargoyle, 1905. Etching. BNF.

254. Ass chimera on the inner balustrade of the south transept, Notre-Dame, Paris. (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

and snow, a corpse. He played on its proximity to the hospitals and death factories of the Île-de-la-Cité. He described it as deserted except for tourists and called it "an inert corpse of stone"—like the corpses brought to the neighboring hospital of the Hôtel-Dieu.[71]

Women alone on the cathedral are also represented as cold, ethereal signs of an ideal in a series of prints by Jouas, *Paris vu par Notre-Dame* (1905). In one etching two large girls stand on the very top of the southern tower, while more unusual is a composition in which the head of a woman wrapped up in furs appears in the lower left corner below the vast broken chimera of a seated ass (fig. 253). This many-teated ass chimera (the multiple breasts are always avoided by photographers and artists) was one of the hidden extra ones carved for the balustrade of the south transept, not the west facade, and is a superb exercise in fleshliness (fig. 254). The juxtaposition of the elegant girl's face with the bloated, faceless ugliness of this broken stone creature is made even more portentous by light streaming down from the sky above, like the sun breaking through after a storm.

255. Fernand Le Quesne, *Madame la pluie*. From *L'Illustration*, April 1896.

But by far the most startling image juxtaposing gargoyles, girls, and inclement weather conditions, albeit in a more erotic framework, is Fernand Le Quesne's *Madame la pluie*, or *Madame Rain*, a painting exhibited at the Salon of 1896 (fig. 255). Uniting the traditional association of women and water with the impressionist obsession with the weather, the artist found an original way to present the femme fatale motif that was legion in the Salon of that year. Females were symbolically linked to the uncontrollable spilling-over of water, but instead of a nymph in a Roman bath Le Quesne displays the flesh of his coy nude among the gargoyles in a Paris rainstorm. The naked girl sits astride an ejaculating horned demon gargoyle below the gallery of the west facade, as if one of the visitors to the balustrade had taken off her clothes and climbed out among the chimeras! Reproduced in *L'Illustration* in April 1896, the painting was very popular. It associates the feminine with a natural force, although it juxtaposes this with Notre-Dame's phallic demonic projections.

The cathedral as a female symbol appears in *Pauvre savant!* a print by Oswald Heidbrinck, where she is compared to the Eiffel Tower, which was finished for the World's Exposition in 1889 (fig. 256). One is the product of manic male mechanical science, its dark phallic thrust the embodiment of all the vanity and folly of moder-

256. Oswald Heidbrinck, *Pauvre savant!* 1889: the male Eiffel Tower versus the female Notre-Dame. BNF.

nity, the other an ethereal and expansive spirit. The west facade of the cathedral of Notre-Dame becomes the wide veil covering the entrance to the body of an angelic woman who looks down pityingly and condescendingly at the "pauvre savant" struggling to "get it up" below. Huysmans attacked the Eiffel Tower in 1889 as "the spire of Our Lady of Second-Hand Merchandise, a spire lacking bells but armed with a cannon that announces the beginning and end of services, that invites the faithful to the masses of finance."[72] Deriding its "gravy-colored ironmongery" as "infundibuliform latticework . . . that solitary suppository riddled with holes," the author was applying a term used by doctors to describe the funnel-shaped anus of pederasts to one of the brightest new monuments of modernity.[73]

There is no better image of the feminization of the Gothic cathedral that took place in France than Huysmans. But the same tendency may also be observed in

England with Ruskin and in the United States with Henry Adams. Adams compares cathedrals to fashionable society ladies comparing their shopping at La Samaritaine. "The Virgin especially required all the resources of art, and the highest. Notre-Dame of Chartres would have laughed at Notre-Dame of Paris if she had detected an economy in her robes; Notre-Dame of Rheims or Rouen would have derided Notre-Dame of Amiens if she had shown a feminine, domestic, maternal turn towards cheapness. The Virgin was never cheap."[74]

Just as the cathedral came to stand for all that was pure and perfect in the Victorian ideal of femininity, its monstrous alter ego remained as popular as ever. Rather than an angel, an emaciated old whore leans over the dilapidated brown towers of Notre-Dame in an amazing and little-known painting by the Belgian symbolist painter Eugène Laermans (1864–1940) (fig. 257). This work was inspired by Huysmans's novel *En rade*, published in 1887. In chapter 10, Jacques Marles has a nightmarish vision of a woman seated on the rim of one of the towers of the Church of Saint-Sulpice, "a sordid trollop who was laughing in a lewd and mocking manner . . . her nose crushed from the end, her mouth wasted, toothless in front, decayed in back, crossed like that of a clown, by two streaks of blood. . . . [She] held out over the square the beggar's sacks of her old breasts, the badly closed shutters of her paunch, the coarse wineskins of her vast thighs, between which opened up the dry tuft of a filthy seaweed mattress!"[75] Laermans's woman appears not as an observer on the balustrade but as Huysmans's monstrous giantess of corruption, death, and decay, who has taken the word "cathedral" literally—*cathedra* being the chair of the bishop—but has usurped the prelate's position and now lolls exhaustedly on it as her own worldly throne.[76] Whereas Huysmans placed her on the newer church and at the very center of the "renouveaux catholique" of the end of the century, in the painting the church is less specific, more Gothic, and indeed seems like Notre-Dame rather than Saint-Sulpice. In her left hand the woman dangles her false breasts, and with her right hand she squeezes her empty teat; the dried-up opposite of the nurturing Virgin, she is an epitome of the unfruitful female, like the two female chimeras who have similarly empty dugs (fig. 257). One of her feet rests on a vast draped coffin while the other dangles near the black drapery that hangs before the cathedral's open door. An owl sits on the northernmost tower, the only sign of any chimerical beast in this painting, while above the dark fetid air on the central flèche stands a fantasy crucifix, a symbol of hope that rises above the cathedral, now itself sunk into the depths of a hellish world. In *En rade*, Jacques realizes that "this abominable whore was truth,"[77] who acts as a prostitute, caressing each individual according to his desires. She also embodies the male fear of syphilis, judged by one doctor to have infected eighty-five thousand people in Paris by 1890. This profaned, prostituted cathedral reoccurs in other liter-

257. Eugène Laermans, *La Vieille*, 1891. Private collection, Belgium. (Photo: Institute royal du patrimoine artistique, Brussels.)

ary works of the French fin de siècle, such as Maurice Magre's poem "La Cathédrale furieuse," in which the great church is presented as a hysterical woman who moans of how the "giant sex of my Gothic portal" (le sexe géant de mon portail gothique) has been violated by thousands, opening into the enormous belly, and how the "rump of the apse with its ogival breasts" (la croupe de l'abside et les seins ogivaux) and the two towers like legs spread obscenely apart eventually shatter into "foul rubble" (des debris immondes).[78]

Another symbolist painting that is based, like these literary works, upon the symbolic appeal of the chimeras of Notre-Dame and that also combines the cathedral's capacity to embody both the monstrous feminine body and the ideal feminine spirit is a painting of 1904 by the American artist living and working in Paris Louis Welden Hawkins, called *Le Sphinx et la chimère* (fig. 258).[79] This juxtaposition has a complex pedigree in romanticism in Hugo, de Nerval, Flaubert, and Huysmans, who all use the juxtaposition to conjure the dual nature of woman, as riddle and spirit (the sphinx) and as hybrid and body (the chimera).[80] For contemporary fin-de-siècle artists the sphinx that Hegel had called "the symbol of symbolism itself" was one of the archetypal signs of enigmatic female sexuality, and it was also utilized in paintings by Gustave Moreau and Fernand Khnopff.[81] But on the balustrade of Notre-Dame, Welden Hawkins found a medieval rather than an Egyptian model for his sphinx, one that does not have the face of a beautiful woman, but the mouth of a monster. The lower half of the painting is executed in thick impasted oil paint, representing the stone monster bound to its earthly existence, while the more ethereal and transparent female face is painted in more fluid layers. The artist has carefully studied the front part, paws, and head of Viollet-le-Duc's bowed dog-chimera devouring grapes on the south tower of Notre-Dame—one of the few beasts to have a lower body that arches up to expose vast haunches, a vast rib cage, and hindquarters, its sinuous tail twisting almost obscenely between its legs, all details visible in a superb photograph made by Neurdein Frères and sold through the Monuments historiques (fig. 259).

That Welden Hawkins actually made sketches up in the tower is clear from the dynamic shadows that play across the canvas, suggesting twilight. His focus upon the creature's sharply defined face offers details that have sadly disappeared from the original due to recent pollution. But the painter did not depict the lower body of the massive statue, preferring to focus on its gobbling paws and slavering jaws. In contrast to the chimera's massive materiality, as if unable to free itself from the heavy weight of its body that pulls it down to feed, the head of the chimera, which was based on the head of Jacqueline, the painter's daughter, is winged and seems about to take flight. The gender of the stone beast is ambiguous. At first one might want to read into Welden Hawkins's painting the split between male and female, a

258. Louis Welden Hawkins, *Le Sphinx et la chimère*, 1904. Oil on canvas, 79.5 × 73 cm. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

259. Neurdein Frères, two chimeras, Notre-Dame, Paris (nos. 22 and 23), ca. 1900. Albumen print, 280 × 385 mm.

baser male appetite embodied in the chimera and an idealized ethereal female gaze in the sphinx. In a typical symbolist strategy, however, it seems to me that Welden Hawkins juxtaposes a paradoxical monstrosity within a single creature, finding in the concrete reality of the cathedral's stones and in the pictorial language of paint two aspects of the feminine. The painter's sister-in-law, Mena d'Albola, used his drawing of the subject as the cover for her collection of poems, *Le signe double*.[82] In this painting, then, we see a phantasmal repetition of those contemporary views of actual ladies looking from the balustrade. Like the painter's daughter they look innocently and inspirationally up and out to a world beyond, but they are in fact as chained to the stone of the cathedral as any chimera, double signs themselves, dangerous sexual predators, devourers of male desire as well as inscrutable sphinxes. Moreover, as a single being, if her beautiful head represents her mystery, the clawing beast is her lower body. The fantasy here is of the woman as castrator, making the monster of Notre-Dame and its voracious jaws stand for the *vagina dentata*.

A startlingly direct image of a female viewer on the balustrade, represented both as an object of desire and as the feared "new woman," appeared on the cover of the women's magazine *Nos Loisirs* in 1908 with the title "What Is This Young Woman

260. Woman next to the cat chimera. Cover of *Nos Loisirs* 3, no. 14 (5 April 1908).

Looking at from the Heights of Notre-Dame?" (fig. 260). Once again the chimeras of the cathedral provide a locus for imagining the collision of various temporalities, but also for the invention of new modes of subjectivity, for this is surely an image of a female flaneur, with all the poise and authority that Henri Le Secq assumed half a century before (see fig. 215). Yet whereas the photographer had himself taken alongside the horned demon, this dark-dressed girl is juxtaposed with the most ruthlessly gendered of all the animal chimeras—"la Chatte." She places her shadowy hand on the beast's back, her fingers as dark as those of another woman touching her cat/genitals—those of Manet's Olympia. Although fully clothed, this girl's gaze is just as direct. According to Toussenel, the cat was an animal keen to maintain its appearance, "so silky, so shiny, so eager for caresses"; he remarked that civilization could "no more easily dispense with the cat than with the prostitute."[83] The article in *Nos*

Loisirs also muses on this woman's identity, transferring the mystery of the chimera's gaze to that of "this lovely young girl in modern dress," who daydreams about the history of the cathedral "begun in the thirteenth century," Victor Hugo's novel, and also the "more profane events" happening below. It ends by asking whether this is "a Parisienne who has escaped the turbulent city or a girl from the provinces who has been attracted by its tumult, mixing in her dreams memories of the past and the incomparable charm of today's panorama."[84]

The gaze of the most famous chimera of Notre-Dame is projected onto that of the feared female in a watercolor by the French artist Gustav Adolphe Mossa titled *Notre-Dame de Paris* (fig. 261). A later work, though very much in the fin-de-siècle tradition, it shows an exquisitely dressed and beautiful winged woman, her elbows resting on the balustrade of the cathedral, looking nonchalantly into the distance, where a winged youth falls like Daedalus from the spire or just out of the sky. Usually interpreted as the indifference of mothers to the suffering of their sons during the Great War, Mossa's image has a more general charge, especially in light of the tradition of the fear of the female's castrating gaze we have traced in this chapter.[85] It is also significant in terms of the gendering of melancholy that usually "gives to the melancholic man (the *homo melancholicus*) a privileged position within literary, philosophical and artistic canons": transferring the pose onto a female figure makes it a negative rather than idealizing image of mourning.[86] On the other hand, it is not so surprising that the stone stare of the Stryge, which was from the beginning so sexually ambiguous, should eventually become that of the fin-de-siècle "femme fatale."

261. Gustav Adolphe Mossa, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, 1916. Watercolor. Private collection, Paris. (Photo: after Soubiran.)

IV · *Lulu Makes the Gargoyles Speak*

Look and listen. We have centuries still to contemplate Paris, O gargoyles, my sisters, immutable female spectators.

ONE OF THE CHIMERAS IN FÉLICIEN CHAMPSAUR'S *Lulu* (1901)[87]

The most sexually explicit of all the transformations of the gargoyles of Notre-Dame appears in Félicien Champsaur's remarkable novel *Lulu: Roman clownesque*, written in 1900. Here the gigantic silhouette of the cathedral opens and closes the second book, "La Reine de Paris," in which the gargoyles and chimeras not only look and listen, but also begin to speak. Lugubrious commentators, they discuss the charms and dangers of the book's spectacular heroine Lulu, who is described as the "symbol, synthesis, and résumé of all femininity." The vignette which opens part 2 of the book shows four of the cathedral's chimeras—the elephant, two birds, and the big-bosomed dog-woman we have already discussed—who are joined on the balustrade

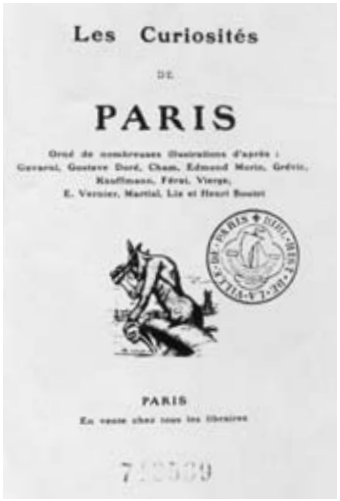
262. Gargirls among the gargoyles. From Félicien Champsaur, *Lulu: Roman clownesque* (Paris, 1901), p. 41.

by the tiny, fluid forms of three volputuous naked females who dangle like jewels from their precipitous appendages (fig. 262). Embodying the aerial antics of Lulu herself, an acrobat who performs mesmerizing acts of trapeze-striptease, these small spirits of feminine allure have roused even these stones to life. No one captured the transformation of the chimeras during the fin de siècle into creatures driven above everything else by sexual desire so pointedly as Champsaur, who from his opening sentence describing "la majestueuse cathédrale" makes the Gothic structure both an object and, through its gargoyles, a strangely sentient subject of erotic desire: "The gargoyles, tinted in places by rosy glimmers flying about among the stone projections, make the towers and friezes bristle with the bizarre, even monstrous, caprices of their forms. Grandiose cynocephalic heads flank the four corners of the monumental towers, and stick out, between the extraordinary ears of dogs that exaggerate their canine resemblance, laughing muzzles with lips drawn back over sharp teeth, muzzles surmounted by protuberances akin to those of tapirs. Here are also, along the towers, squatting apes, whose feet develop large membraneous wings, as if to show their shameful genitals, erect between their stone thighs."[88] That this author emphasizes the genital aspects of the chimeras, which are actually not present in any of Viollet-le-Duc's restored sculptures but were projected onto them by viewers from below, is crucial to my argument in this chapter: that each age dreams these monsters differently. The novelist delights in describing the cats and wolves with simian bodies, eagles with mens' bodies, and men with birds' beaks whose talons grip the edge of the abyss. His imagination seems to take him into realms of projection and

interpretation, so that he sees things that Viollet-le-Duc never created. For example, he describes one of the chimeras as "a monk, above his robe, raises, between a pig's snout and the head of goat, his grotesque face framed by a cowl." Even more unusual is what he describes as "nuns, with half-uncovered busts, let us see their breasts and up to the belly, split and hairy; their feet show the cloven hooves of demons projecting from the folds in their robes."[89] Champsaur describes the infernal court of chimeras for no fewer than three pages, as the ultimate "spectateurs de Paris." That this was a popular trope of the period can be judged from the cover of Henri Boutet's little volume *Les Curiosités de Paris*. Here the two-horned demon on the south tower (no. 22) peers down through a pair of binoculars as a voyeur of the beauties of the Belle Époque (fig. 263).

As dusk falls over the city, the stones in Champsaur's novel begin to murmur to one another. The first to speak is none other than the pensive demon—"a winged and horned devil, resting his elbows on the corner of the terrace, his head in his hands, his tongue protruding over his lip."[90] His lament is full of modern ennui, the melancholy that has nothing medieval about it but that is a response to modernity. "Paris is boring," he laments, suffering from Baudelairean spleen. "The houses today are ugly, high, and all the same; the streets swarm with black human insects who are all hurrying, struggling for one thing—to make money. Life in Paris is sad; its spectacle, monotonous."[91] His gargoyle neighbor, "a monk with a hilarious grin" (un moine au rictus hilaire), agrees that the time of heroes has passed, the time of kings and emperors has gone, rituals and sacred processions are over, and no more do knights and ladies promenade on the parvis below. He concludes, "Today the church is nothing but children, fools, senile old people and hypocrites."[92]

Like the grave and guttural sounds emitted by De Esseintes's exhausted ventriloquist-mistress in Huysmans's *À rebours*, the gargoyles give the cathedral a voice that seems to emerge from out of a distant past, decrying the egalitarianism of the era and the architecture of modernity with its ugly houses. Lamenting the disappearance of kings, knights, and heroic piety, they emit Ruskinian laments at the mediocritization of modernity and its emphasis upon capital: "Money is king today; money is God!" (L'Argent est Roi, aujourd'hui, l'Argent est Dieu). But the gargoyles are not just a load of old conservatives, groaning on to each other about the good old days. Like that great monster Ruskin himself, they are simultaneously admirers of a hierarchical, seamless medieval order that paradoxically allowed for imagination, variety, and difference. There are ominous undertones to their ranting. Chimeras with pigs' heads and monkey-faced old men moan that "l'époque est égalitaire." It surprises them that "Mothschild and the *president de la république* are no better dressed than their little employees and functionaries."[93] "Mothschild," who will be one of the


Les Curiosités
DE
PARIS
PARIS

263. Title page of Henri Boutet, *Les Curiosités de Paris*, n.d. (Photo: BHVP.)

264. The chimeras announcing Lulu's performance. From Félicien Champsaur, *Lulu: Roman clownesque* (Paris, 1901), p. 50.

characters in the story to become infatuated with Lulu, refers of course to the Jewish Rothschild family of bankers. But tonight the melancholy mourning for the lost medieval past for these monsters is different. For the Gothic stones, too, are caught up in the excitement that links the new spaces of entertainment in the modern city, the circus, theater and cabarets of the Left Bank and Montmartre. "Look and listen! We have already had centuries to contemplate Paris, O gargoyles, my sisters, immutable female spectators." This reference to their feminine gender is significant considering Champsaur's emphasis upon the feminine. The last words of this opening chapter are placed directly above a vignette showing two of the chimeras, including the one which is clearly female, who turns away as if to look in anticipation toward the new attraction in Paris tonight (fig. 264). "Tonight at the Nouveau Cirque at ten o' clock the clowness Lulu will make her first appearance."[94]

The following chapters recount the performances, on and off stage, of this beauty of the Belle Époque, whose body is the focus of an almost fetishistic fascination for both the author and his audience. Her breasts are described over and over again—"des souples torsions du buste" which is "nearly naked under her black silk vest." She is naked to the waist—"décolletée en coeur jusqu'à la ceinture."[95] In one of the most amazing descriptions in the whole novel Lulu performs an act with her pig Rambô, an amorous charade of courtship between human and animal that presents "toute la Hideur et toute la Beauté de l'Amour" and that culminates in an obscene kiss between porcine and female flesh.[96] The contrast between beauty and beast, however, is more complex, since Lulu herself represents something almost monstrous. She is described as "possessed . . . so desirable, enigmatic, a sphinx in the flesh, marvelously beautiful, Lulu, clowness, mime."[97] Mingling with her feminine attraction a "fluide pervers," her physical contortions and aerial gyrations project her into the realm of

the inhuman, high above her audience just like the chimeras that are high above the city of Paris. For most of the novel however, the dancing girl's body is described and depicted with her feet not on the ground but high in the air, flying as part of that acrobatic aerial fantasy that Mary Russo has described: "For the artist who both identifies with and desires the female acrobat, several fantasies converge: the fantasy of a controlling spectatorship, the fantasy of artistic transcendence and freedom signified by the flight upwards and the defiance of gravity, and the fantasy of a femininity that defies the limits of the body, especially the female body."[98]

The demons of the cathedral, forms which should represent the tradition and stability of past beliefs in contrast to the modernity and volatility of Lulu's modern body, are in Champsaur's fantasy just as guilty of perversity. By putting her head between her legs she becomes an inverted medieval monster, *showing* herself, "*se montrer*," in posters, on advertisements all over the city, where her curvaceous form sells various commodities. This constantly changing quality is captured in the illustrations to the 1901 edition by dozens of artists including Félicien Rops and Abel Gerbaud, as well as in photographs representing Lulu as a host of different women, some larger, some smaller, some darker, some lighter—presenting her nearly always naked body as a protean and paradoxical erotic object. The clowness, recalling the "phase de clownisme" of the female hysteric with its movements and contortions analyzed by Charcot, transmogrifies like the city itself—"like a symbol of Paris where she evolved—magician, coquette or cynic—a beauty who sometimes presented herself with the horrible or grotesque mask of a beast—multiform, in perpetual contrast with herself, the same and different."[99] Lulu's body is sometimes described in Gothic terms—at one point she stands so that her long slender hands "seem to draw attention to and frame with the charming ogive of her fingers a provocative shadow in the crux of her skirt."[100] If Champsaur saw the projecting gargoyle as phallic, he also saw in the Gothic arch the dark secret of the uncanny female sex. Certain details of Viollet-le-Duc's restoration of Notre-Dame, notably some of the smaller carvings underneath the gargoyles of the north transept, such as a woman unveiling herself to reveal large, rounded breasts, beneath the vast thrust of a gargoyle directly above her, might have suggested to Champsaur this association between striptease and the arousal of the Gothic gargoyle (see fig. 250). By the end of this second book all of Paris—men, women, and pigs—has fallen in love with Lulu, "apothéose des modernités," but Champsaur returns to the medieval center of the city, to Notre-Dame, to let the gargoyles have the last word. They are pictured one above the other staring in fascination at Lulu, who appears on the opposite page in a spirited drawing by Jan van Beers dancing in an monk's cowl, her buttocks exposed, her feet having become, like their own, curving talons (fig. 265). Paradoxically, in bringing the beasts to erection,

265. "How beautiful is Lulu!" From Félicien Champsaur, *Lulu: Roman clownesque* (Paris, 1901), pp. 250–51 (illustration on right by Jan van Beers).

266. [Lucien?] Jacquelux, phallic-anal chimera. From Félicien Champsaur, *Lulu: Roman clownesque* (Paris, 1929), p. 46.

making them hard, she makes them fleshy, soft. The stone creatures of the cathedral become the very emblems of the phallus aroused by the monstrous woman.

In the 1929 edition of the novel, with 330 line illustrations by Jacquelux, Lulu's polymorphous body is transformed from an art nouveau vegetable or flower into a more streamlined breastless and androgynous monster. With the svelte, machine-inspired lines of art deco rather than the vegetal exuberance and fruity fatness of the fin de siècle, the gargoyles appear even more sexual, their breasts grow enormous, and others seem like penises, rising from their stony sleep. One of them has an enormous pair of buttocks which also become the round testicles of the projecting phallus of throbbing stone (fig. 266). This artist expresses with powerful visual economy their arousal as well as their frustration at being fixed to the sacred edifice. Champsaur's dialogue is worth quoting in full as the demon with the single horn sighs:

> "How beautiful she is, Lulu! To be a man for a night! To see her dance! To 'know' her!"
>
> A tiger, beaked like a parrot, visible from the sides under his meager and mossy skin of lichen, squats:
>
> "She is not for gargoyles. Remember that you are of the church, old satyr!"
>
> "Alas! for centuries," sighed the unicorn faun.
>
> A stern eagle, perched on the length of a cornice, between a crow with an enor-

mous head and a sullen pelican crowned with a stone crest browned by the years:

"She is one of the damned, your Lulu, a dancer from hell who is already burning."

"Hell makes money," tittered a horned monkey.

A salamander with the body of a woman, who stoops over the parapet above the parvis, swelling out her female breasts, bursts with holy anger like a devotee hardened by ten centuries. But an old devil, grinning and squatting, sticks out his tongue, jabbers incomprehensible words while licking his muzzle, which he holds in his hands, his eyes avidly fixed on Paris where night was falling, sparkling with light:

"Dancers, what joy! She will damn more souls and put more bodies in heaven than a thousand satans. What an indecent and marvelous poem! Long live Lulu!"

"Long live Lulu!" cried a female chimera.

A pelican, with the profile of an ascetic, groaned at the shipwreck of manners, the decadence of this putrid fin-de-siècle, dejected that an actress of the theater should galavanize them. Then a monk with a white beard, lost in his worldly meditation, who had still not spoken a word, lifted his stone arm toward the cantankerous gargoyle:

"Blaspheme no longer! . . . When a beautiful woman undresses, it is God who reveals himself."[101]

This part of the book ends in the 1901 edition with a vignette of the most famous demon of all (fig. 267). Both his horns have grown much more elongated, as if erect with desire, and his eyes are lit by a strange, luminous force. His tongue protrudes like that on the face of the moon above, as though all the creatures and things in the universe were salivating at the thought of Lulu, who will dance at the Folies Bergère—her last act—the luminous dance that has aroused even the stone demon from his melancholy.

267. The lovesick Stryge. From Félicien Champsaur, *Lulu: Roman clownesque* (Paris, 1901), p. 252.

V · *Gay Gargoyles of the Nineties*

"I am acquainted with the delectable apparition of the stage box. . . . That pallor, that langourous attitude, that febrile state of the eyes and lips is a deliberate mask which they have cultivated. It is by means of the douche and a healthy household routine—early morning walks followed by long hours of repose on the chaise longue—that the Seraphita of the premières and the ephebe of the concert hall have arrived at that charming and chimerical appearance."[102] Jean Lorrain seems to have the chimeras of the balustrade of Notre-Dame in mind when in a chapter of his novel *Monsieur de Phocas*, published in 1901, he presents a nightmare vision of Parisian high society, as a series of ghoulish apparitions leaning out of their stage boxes in order to leer and gloat, to see and be seen. In addition to bloated bankers with animals' snouts, and decomposing duchesses, he describes those effeminate men who, like himself, were forced to hide behind the double mask of misogyny and medievalism. One of Viollet-le-Duc's most striking chimeras (no. 50), which holds the carcass of a dead bird in its two hands, is too curved in the shoulders and soft in the hips to be male but too flat chested and muscular to be female and seems just such a creature of indeterminate gender (fig. 268). With the soft, hairless chin of an ephebe, the startled horselike creature seems caught in a frenzy of desire. A pictorial presentation of "the ephebe with inviting looks" appeared in a special issue of the satirical review *L'Assiette au beurre* for October 1902 entitled "Les Monstres de la société." Charles-Lucien Léandre's biting full-page images of "the deformed and repugnant monsters of modern life" include—in addition to "The Bourgeois," "The Parvenu," "The Bluestocking," "The Sphinx," and "The Androgyne"—"Les Beaux Adolescents" (fig. 269). This group of youths with bent arms and pouting profiles arouses the indignation and/or lust of two leering older men above. The last lines of the poem below reads: "I have the soul of a girl beneath the skin of a pretty boy." Newly codified gestures and poses meant that certain of the chimeras were embodiments of another feared monster of the feminine for the fin de siècle—the invert.

"Invert," the verb meaning to turn upside down, was the term most often used by doctors in the late nineteenth century as a noun to refer to a man who was sexually attracted to other men.[103] If the aesthete was seen to confuse masculine and feminine, like the dandy, his power was in controlling the feminine and subordinating it to the mastery of male force. By constrast, the invert turned things upside down, outwardly taking on feminine traits. As Michel Foucault describes in his lectures *Les Anormaux*, the worst monster for the nineteenth century was not a result of the "mixing of two species" but "le mixte de deux sexes."[104] In an 1886 medical dictionary Dr. Alexandre Lacassagne described sexual inversion as resulting from a lack of masculine energy,

268. Horse-faced stryge, Notre-Dame, Paris (no. 50). (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

269. "The Beautiful Adolescents." Page of the series "Les Monstres de la société," by Charles-Lucien Léandre, in *L'Assiette au beurre*, October 1902.

as a degeneration through feminization. The invert was recognizable to the public at large, wrote this expert, by his ambiguous bodily shape as well as by his gestures, which tended toward the feminine, especially his long, spidery hands, sunken eyes, and soft mouth.[105] Lacassagne's student Julien Chevalier wrote a thesis on inversion in 1885 which saw sexual deviance as an atavistic throwback to primitive drives. As Vernon Rosario has shown, the work of both these doctors saw inversion not only as a biological fact but also as a historical reversal: "It was theorized as a retreat from the intellect to the passions and from the real to the fantastical: typically feminine regressions consonant with the effeminacy associated with male hysterics and inversion."[106] Although gender confusion had always been part of the medieval gargoyle's excess, its wondrous capacity to attract and repel, such hybridity was now far more dangerous.

Paris was the capital of inversion, a city where sexual encounters between men were simultaneously displayed and hidden, where homosexual sex was not illegal, as it was in most European cities, and yet where it was carefully policed and prosecuted. Although the "hunt for pederasts" has been seen as beginning in the 1850s, concur-

rent with Napoléon III's rise to power, it was the later part of the century, when a far more elaborate system for recognizing and stigmatizing sexual difference had developed, which would have given the horselike chimera a new charge. Doctors like Ambroise Tardieu probed and examined with his eyes and fingers for "typical signs of passive pederasty . . . excessive development of the buttocks, the infundibuliform deformation of the anus, the relaxing of the sphincter, the smoothing of the skin folds, crests, and caruncles around the anus, extreme distension of the anal orifice, incontinence, ulcerations . . . [and] foreign bodies introduced into the anus."[107] Pederasty revealed itself by these localized abnormalities, as actual irregularities or marks, in the traditional Lamarckian manner of imprints that repeated vice literally sculpted on the bodies of its perpetrators. Tardieu's 1857 publication *Étude médico-légale sur les attentats aux moeurs*, reedited and expanded six times over the next thirty years, sought "to establish upon positive facts and multiple observations that the vice of pederasty leaves, in the conformation of the organs, material traces far more numerous and significant than heretofore believed, the knowledge of which will permit the forensic doctor, in the majority of cases, to direct and confirm the trials that are of such great interest to public morals."[108] Although pederasty was at this time theoretically still legal in France, men were increasingly subject to medical examinations when entrapped by the police in order to determine whether they were "true" pederasts. Tardieu boasted of having undertaken three hundred physical examinations of pederasts and sodomites, divided inverts into passive and active types, and described how, as well as giving off a particularly nauseating odor, both types exhibited distinct physical abnormalities. The active pederast had a pointed penis "like the muzzle of certain animals."[109] A fifty-year-old worker, M., exhibited such a "pénis des animaux de la race canine," and a thirty-seven-year-old Englishman caught masturbating with another in public on the rue de Clichy was discovered to have a penis which came to a point, like that of a dog.[110] This canine physiognomy is a hallmark of many of the chimeras.

The passive invert also bore the imprint of habitual vice—the infundibuliform, or funnel-shaped, anus, like that of a cobbler, B., in whom, "after having spread the muscular masses which formed his ass cheeks, one discovered a deep and profound hole, at the bottom of which opened the anal orifice, forming a kind of funnel with a large, craterlike opening."[111] Tardieu noticed a peculiar disposition of the "fesses," or ass cheeks, of pederasts, in which the two cheeks seem to unite in one complete sphere. None of the gargoyles or chimeras at Notre-Dame has the enormous backside of the ass-gargoyle in Jacquelux's later *Lulu* illustration (fig. 266). But the ephebe chimera is unusual in having a clearly delineated rump and even a tail. Another creature, the ravenous dog, arches up its lower body to reveal an enormous cleft between its

haunches, through which slithers a twisting, tubular tail (fig. 259). Tardieu described the degeneration of the invert in terms of an increasing animal regression: his body bent over on all fours succumbed to the sucking and licking frenzy of dogs. "There is worse yet, following the dirty and disgusting chronicle of these monstrous aberrations. Like pederasts swallowing sperm, believing it to replace that which one has lost. There are also sodomites who, having their anus licked with the tongue, ejaculate spontaneously, without any manual action. A pederast and sodomite, more active than passive, thin and hysterical, assured me that he had been the object of this deed. The dog-man is thus made a reality."[112]

Opening its large jaws, the effeminate chimera of Notre-Dame has no teeth (fig. 268). This is a creature that can only suck, reminiscent of what was observed by Tardieu in two pederasts who displayed "inverted and deformed lips, completely in keeping with the infamous usage to which they are put."[113] The same kinds of animal associations were made by police inspector Louis Canler as early as in his 1862 memoirs of life as an inspector in the notorious "vice squad" of Paris. The policeman is more interested in the external signs, usually of a feminine nature, such as a shaved chin, that allowed him to distinguish no fewer than four categories of *antiphysitiques*, also known as *tantes* or inverts, as well as two kinds of male prostitute, including the boy prostitutes enjoyed by Huysmans, Jean Lorrain, and Paul Verlaine—the "petit Jésus" who became part of the iconography of the Parisian street. They were recognized and represented by artists with a particular walk, costume, and physiognomy, which once more emphasized the large buttocks.[114] The discourse of physiognomy, which had been so influential on Viollet-le-Duc in his creating the chimeras, gained a quite different and altogether more ominous use as the century came to its close.

Faces of snarling canines and long-tongued, lecherous dog-men with long muzzles and snouts appear among the most powerful of the proper gargoyles created for the western towers and the nave of the cathedral by Viollet-le-Duc. The very same monsters of medievalism that had been seen as passive "holes" and dangerously overflowing, open channels—and thus as female by the medical experts of the fin de siècle—could just as easily be viewed as tools engorged with hot male passion, tubes of terror, and thus making the cathedral a veritable priapic grove. This phallic dimension was an ancient aspect of the gargoyle's power to dispel evil spirits—using the weapon of the gaze of the penis against the other evil eye. But the male member had lost much of its traditional Gallic gusto in this period. A large percentage of Parisian penises of the late nineteenth century were affected by sexually transmitted diseases, especially syphilis, which touched large numbers of the population. The resultant panic and fear helps explain the power of the medical profession to delve into, define, and delimit bodies, whether they were made of flesh or of stone.

The same Dr. Witkowski who pronounced on the gynecology of gargoyles had much to say about medieval sculptures showing "the vice against nature." Thus, in his 1908 study of the obscene in ecclesiastical art a console carved in the shape of a pair of buttocks in the crypt of Bourges Cathedral belongs either to a "big-bummed Venus" or "homosexual from across the Rhine." This is a reference not only to the wide girth of this particular ass but also to the German origin of the term "homosexual," first coined in 1869 but popularized through Richard Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis* in 1886.[115] The ubiquitous medieval image of the anus, with its Rabelaisian associations of fecundity and its traditional apotropaic function, is quite anachronistically labeled in terms of this newly named "perversion," and elsewhere sculptures of males grabbing each others' genitals in the stalls of the Cathedral of Amiens are described using the more common late nineteenth-century terms for the same complaint—"uranien." This term, too, was a German coinage, invented by the German magistrate Karl Heinrich Ulrichs and introduced to France around the same time in Lacassagne's 1886 article "Péderastie" and also used by experts like Charcot and Chevalier. Between the two wars of 1870 and 1914 accusations of homosexuality were aimed at the enemy across the Rhine, so much so that an 1896 novel, *Les Invertis*, was subtitled *Le Vice allemand*. A current scandal that may have inspired Dr. Witkowski to make these nationalistic associations was the Eulenburg affair, which shook Germany in 1907, in which the kaiser was thought to be surrounded by a coterie of homosexuals, including Phillip von Eulenburg and Kuno von Moltke, who were put on trial. In his last book he went as far as to use the epithet "vice germanique" for the act of sodomy that some had seen in a gargoyle at Orléans.[116] The same terrifying power and the same mixture of disgust and desire links Dr. Witkowski, the expert on the erotic in medieval sculptures traveling through France looking for carved signs of sexual perversions (always defined as "other") on the cathedrals, and Dr. Tardieu, the expert on the infundibuliform anus searching for the sculpted signs of pederasty on actual bodies. Police inspector Canler uses a medieval topos to describe the bodies of the *persilleuses*, the highly effeminate inverts. Taking off their often rich and fancy clothes, they revealed "bodies that had never bathed, hands that though white were dirtied by their acts. One can compare these beings with whited sepulchers which, perfectly clean on the exterior, contain, however, nothing but putrefaction within."[117]

The medicalization of another sexual practice is suggested by a number of the chimeras who, like our open-mouthed "invert" also hold small animals in their hands (fig. 268). He is literally "choking the chicken." The erotic meaning of a youth holding a bird had been linked to this vice since antiquity.[118] But it is the expressions on some of the chimeras' gaunt, frenzied faces that are most remininiscent of the degen-

eration thought to be brought on by the solitary vice, like the etiolated body of the horned demon with the tongue and hairy thighs who seems to rub up against the corner of the south balustrade (no. 22). Masturbators were often described as being akin to wild beasts: "They have the appearance of filthy animals, of ridiculous monsters, finally of those fantastic beings that come to excite the imagination in postures more or less indecent, and that bring to the genital organs a strong irritation which results in seminal ejaculation accompanied by those weaknesses." The results of "onanisme" were thought to be imbecility, madness, and worse, and the masturbator's body was actually believed to turn into that of a monster as "his skin becomes earthy, his eyes hollow, his tongue quivering."[119] The greatest masturbator of Notre-Dame of is of course the Stryge, in his capacity to contain and be the projection of everything, not only every vice, but also every avenue of sensation sought by his wiggling tongue and his sunken eyes, staring into the abyss of self-pleasure. Since Méryon first called him a her, by entitling his etching *Le Stryge* (the masculine she-vampire), the demon's gender had also been suspect. For the fin de siècle, he was to become not just the imp of the perverse but the more positive and semisecret patron saint of the pederasts.

In Frederick H. Evans's haunting portrait of the English artist Aubrey Beardsley, the young man stretches his immensely long fingers over the jagged outline of a face, posing self-consciously as none other than his favorite gargoyle—the Stryge (fig. 270). Beardsley wrote to Evans in August 1894, saying, "I think the photos are splendid, couldn't be better," and asked for copies on "cabinet boards."[120] In another photograph, this one without the hands, published in *The Book Buyer* for 1895–96, the same beaked and pensive profile with its vast vertiginous nose and elongated ears is in fact labeled "The Gargoyle."[121] Beardsley's identification with the creature that he would have known from Méryon's *Le Stryge* would have been partly stimulated by its association with the romantic self-image of the contemplative artist going back to Victor Hugo. But the Stryge's isolation from the rest of the world, his traditional association with excess and luxury as well as feminine traits found in his lovely, long hands, could also be more specifically linked to the increasing visibility of the contemporary aesthete's gender hybridity. Situating desire on the surfaces of the posed body, like the hero of Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Beardsley wanted to strike a fashionable pose: "Fashion, by which what is really fantastic becomes for a moment universal, and dandyism, which in its own way, is an attempt to assert the absolute modernity of beauty, had, of course, their fascination for him."[122] By contrast, the demon's more muscular shoulders pointed to another "virile" mode of homosexuality, emphasizing the classical over the Gothic, also present in this period. The identification of the sickly Englishman with this stone vampire was also one that was especially powerful, since, as Christopher Craft has argued in relation to

270. Frederick H. Evans, "gargoyle" portrait of Aubrey Beardsley, 1894. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Bram Stoker's 1898 novel *Dracula*, the vampire, possessing only one sex organ—the mouth—undermined gender difference: "With its soft flesh barred by hard bone, its red crossed by white, this mouth compels opposites and contrasts into a frightening unity, and it asks some disturbing questions. Are we male or are we female? Do we have penetrators or orifices? And if both, what does that mean? And what about our bodily fluids, the red and the white? What are the relations between blood and semen, milk and blood? Furthermore, this mouth, bespeaking the subversion of the stable and lucid distinctions of gender, is the mouth of all vampires, male and female."[123] As a blood-coughing, tubercular, and effeminate homosexual, Beardsley in his identification with the vampire of Notre-Dame created more than a projection of artistic hubris: it was the invention of a body double.

For Beardsley and his contemporaries the pensive chimera becomes the very demon of decadence, the phantom of what might be called the "gay Gothic" of the English fin de siècle. What we witness with the duplications and repetitions of the melancholy demon in this period, moving from stone to ink and then performed before a camera, is what Foucault saw as a love of the potential of image making itself, "with their migration and perversion, their transvestism, their disguised difference. Images—whether drawings, engravings, photographs or paintings—were no doubt admired for their power to make one think of other things; but what was particularly enchanting was their ability, in their surreptitious difference, to be mistaken for one another."[124] If the monstrous chimeras of the cathedral emblematized the image of the invert as a newly invented medical, physical, and social type, for the inverts themselves they came to represent a less monstrous and more poetic aspect of late nineteenth-century gender ambiguity. The irony, theatricality, and humor evident in Evans's photograph of Beardsley as the Stryge makes the chimera, in its original form and in Méryon's print, one of the earliest works of art to be appropriated for the aesthetics of "camp." Camp has been described as "dandyism without elitism" and as a form of modern melancholia that deals with boredom by aestheticizing it.[125] What is most remarkable about this appropriation of Méryon's *Le Stryge* in particular was that an image which was produced to demonize sexual perversion has been appropriated by the perverts themselves in order to celebrate it. This is a trope of undermining homophobic discourse through playful redeployment of its most derogatory images, which would later become a hallmark of the twentieth-century camp sensibility. The association between Gothic style and homosexuality was a long one, going back to Horace Walpole and Thomas Beckford, eighteenth-century lovers of boys and flying buttresses both, as well as important collectors and transformers of English taste. For rigid, imageless nineteenth-century Protestant Anglo-Saxon culture, Catholicism signaled the possibility of excesses of all sorts, both in Ralph Adams Cram's Boston and Beardsley's London.

271. Pichard, cover of Paul Verlaine, *Sagesse* (Paris: Éditions Athena, 1947).

272. Duane Michaels, *Joey Dallesandro as a Gargoyle*, 1972. Sidney Janis Gallery, New York.

By the end of the nineteenth century the city of Paris had come to occupy a special place in the nascent homosexual imagination, with poets like Verlaine and Arthur Rimbaud and writers like Huysmans, Lorrain, and Proust, and it boasted bars and special meeting places for casual sex, such as the Tuileries Gardens and, significantly, the banks of the Seine, just under the ever-watchful eyes of the Stryge.[126] That the Stryge became something of a sign for this aspect of Parisian life is also suggested by the cover design of a later edition of Verlaine's *Sagesse*, written in 1880 (fig. 271). In these poems the ex-lover of Rimbaud repents and looks hopefully toward the Catholic Church, although still accompanied by the unmistakable form of the winged demon lodged in the ruins of his earlier debaucheries. A more recent transposition of the "gay" gargoyle is a photograph by Duane Michaels, *Joey Dallesandro as a Gargoyle*, which captures the Andy Warhol movie idol as a buffed equivalent of the Stryge against that most medieval of all modern skylines—Manhattan (fig. 272). The monster awakens one to the joys of the body, fear of it containing at the same time a desire, so that this porn-star-dandy's delicious superiority over the city of sin reads as a kind of anti-Stryge. It celebrates everything that drove poor Méryon to madness—ambiguous male sexuality, the lust of the flesh, and the phallic gaze's omnipotent freedom to enjoy the view, both for Dallesandro looking within and for us looking at him from outside the picture.

As recently as 1991 a French *bande dessinée*, or comic strip, by Alain Frémiet entitled *L'Odeur des mâles* reanimates the pensive demon as a sign of the pleasures of Paris as a homosexual capital. The demon of Notre-Dame looks down over the city and over the act of masturbation taking place below him, licking his lips expectantly (fig. 273). It would be too easy to suggest that the identification of homosexuals with something ejected from the sacred space represents a form of self-hatred. Adrian Rifkin has argued that the historical identity of Paris as a modern city "perhaps more than any other has depended on both the representation and construction-as-abject of what we now call gay sexuality, and that heterosexuality has needed the gay abject as an other-metaphor of its own unacknowledged abjection."[127] But the Stryge does not have to be seen as an image of abjection; the elegant hauteur of the demon as the poseur par excellence seems to me typical of the way in which gay culture has often managed to transform and to redeem, through irony and the peculiar melancholy of camp, even the most intransigent of historical objects.

Aubrey Beardsley was an intimate of the chimeras of Notre-Dame. On a visit to Paris in 1893, despite his worsening tubercular condition, the young man had insisted on making the climb of the steep, winding steps no fewer than three separate times, to see the greatest gargoyle. There he caricatured his friend, the American printmaker Joseph Pennell, sitting in place of the famous stone vampire as an artist-become-demon, obsessed not with staring forever into the abyss, but with etching directly from life (fig. 274). It is a witty culmination of nearly a century of "bird's-eye views." It was Pennell who best characterized the genius of Beardsley's graphic work within the long tradition of the grotesque, in which "the human constantly melts into the animal . . . human skin has scurfed into the scales of reptiles and insects. . . . Nature in the world of these drawings is a font of copiousness and frustration, and what is unsatisfied constantly transforms itself into monstrous modes as in the hermaphrodites, gynanders, and other creatures of dubious gender."[128]

Such creatures cavorted in the flesh, too. Joseph Pennell was in Paris visiting the balcony of Notre-Dame in the spring and summer of 1893, not only with Beardsley but with a whole group of young Englishmen including Robert Stevenson and Robert Ross, who it was rumored had introduced Oscar Wilde to the pleasures of oral and intercrural intercourse at Oxford. Pennell included what must be the most "free" rendering of a chimera from the cathedral, in a pen drawing in a letter written "up in a garret looking over Notre Dame" sent on June 2 of that the same year to the American poet and editor Robert Underwood Johnson (fig. 275). He relates that he is busy working on a series of etchings of French cathedrals "and it seems to me an article—architectural—on the spectres, spooks, devils—ghosts—beasts—fiends which as large as life parade themselves up here might work up stunningly—and

LETTRE À MENSONGES
PARIS LE 17.10.1991
MA CHERIE,
J'ESPERE QUE TU TE PORTES BIEN ET QUE TA NOUVELLE UNIVERSITE TE PLAIT.
JE PENSE BEAUCOUP À TOI.
A PARIS, LE TEMPS EST MAUSSADE ET ÇA COMMENCE À SENTIR SERIEUSEMENT L'HIVER...
ALORS, JE TRAVAILLE SUR MON ROMAN COMME UN VRAI FORCENE.
A MON AVIS, IL DEVRAIT ÊTRE TERMINE POUR LES FETES DE NOEL, SI TOUT VA BIEN.
COMME CELÀ JE POURRAI VENIR PASSER LE NOUVEL AN VERS TOI ET PAR LA MÊME OCCASION DECOUVRIR LOS ANGELES.
SINON, À PART ÇA, JE TIENS LA GRANDE FORME.
JE FAIS MON TENNIS TOUTES LES SEMAINES ET JE VAIS COURIR DE TEMPS EN TEMPS LE DIMANCHE AU BOIS.

273. Alain Frémiet, *L'Odeur des mâles* comic strip (Paris, 1991).

274. Aubrey Beardsley, *Sketch of Mr. Pennell as "the Devil of Notre-Dame,"* 1893. (Photo after *The Drawings of Aubrey Beardsley*.)

there are any amount of stories about these spectres—and they are a fearsome lot too, why as I was working away today—a fellow countryman came up—and the first thing he saw was this looking at him—and the first thing he said when he got his breath was 'J——s C——t—what a son of a b——h'—that's art criticism for you and a compliment to the old carver who skulped it,—Really I think the spooks of Notre-Dame—would go—hey?"[129] The quick sketch that caricatures the shocked tourist shows a little man in a top hat dropping his Baedecker and cowering below a vast smirking frontal monster with a long pointed tongue and a strange black object

275. Joseph Pennell, sketch of spooks of Notre-Dame, 1893, published in Elizabeth Robins Pennell, *The Life and Letters of Joseph Pennell*.

where its phallus should be, which it seems to be holding with both hands. None of the chimeras of Notre-Dame are kneeling, and none have anything resembling genitals, which makes Pennell's sketch even stranger.

Joseph Pennell's own intense and laborious reworking of Méryon's *Le Stryge*, which bore the same title and was etched in 1893 in Paris, is inverted not in the sexual but in the literal sense (fig. 276). In his autobiographical *Adventures of an Illustrator* Pennell relates how he was far more interested in the devils of the gallery than in the rest of the building, and that the minister of fine arts gave him permission to use one of the towers as a studio. "Day after day I toiled up and drew a devil," he tells us, adding, however, that "the devil was only a copy; Viollet-le-Duc saw to that." Pennell evokes the hot homosocial bohemian hangout that the cathedral's upper reaches had become: "It was in the tower that Whistler found me and made me a prisoner and has kept me ever since. And Beardsley who was with me in Paris in 1893, climbed up too and made me into a chimera" (fig. 274).[130]

The demon in Pennell's version (fig. 276) looks out to the right from the vantage point on the left, and the Tour Saint-Jacques now appears on the Left Bank of the Seine. This was intentional on the part of Pennell, who argued that "etchings are made by real etchers on the spot, and are always reversed, for when the drawing is made the right way on the plate it is reversed by printing. . . . The collectors who are worried by such details should collect post-cards, or put their prints before a looking-glass, and they would see them the right way round with a fool behind them holding them up by the corners."[131] Pennell's favorite etcher was his fellow American James McNeill Whistler, who was also convinced of the importance of drawing directly on the metal plate. He loathed the meticulous Méryon and he hated *Le Stryge*. No longer rooted in the spatial topography of the city, Pennell's demon is also a figure of perverse inversion on a psychological level. In his *Etchers and Etching*, first published in 1919, the influential printmaker and teacher showed his resentment at the commodification of Méryon, whom he calls "the first etcher since Rembrandt to whom Stock Exchange methods were applied."[132] His judgment seems a little over the top to say the least: "The bulk of Meryon's work is totally uninteresting, totally uninspired, devoid of spontaneity, absolutely easy to imitate, poor in perspective, without observation, out of scale, faked." His worst work, according to Pennell, was *Le Stryge*, in which the artist "was totally unable to give any idea of the height where the beast is perched, or of the mystery and confusion of old Paris below—his drawing of the tower of St. Jacques is rotten."[133]

Yet Pennell's own 1893 etching pales by comparison with Méryon's more massively concentrated effort. The more recent etcher is more interested in the infinite suggestiveness of the city below than in its ghoulish sentinel. Whereas the massively

276. Joseph Pennell, *Le Stryge*, 1893. Etching, first published state, with balloon in the sky. Art Institute of Chicago.

voluptuous muscles of Méryon's Stryge are hatched with lucid and visceral lines, Pennell's demon is light and fluffy, miniaturized rather than intensified through the etching medium. Even Beardsley's comic sketch of Pennell as the Stryge, his metal plate held in a vast clawlike hand but strangely without the other active hand holding the burin visible, is more expressive of the gargoyle's power than Pennell's own effort (fig. 274). The American etcher's disdain for a masterpiece that he could not bear to repeat seems to have haunted him throughout his career. At this stage, however, partly because of his involvement with English artists like Beardsley, Pennell's work is better placed within the context of a peculiarly English attitude toward the grotesque. As an American artist responding to picturesque "medieval" things in Europe, his work is, however, also redolent of the anxiety of alienation and repetition that will be discussed in the section on transatlantic gargoyles in the final chapter.

The Anglo-Saxon interest in gargoyles and grotesques at the fin de siècle is indicated by the number of books treating the subject which appeared in these years. One of these, T. Tindall Wildridge's *The Grotesque in Church Art* (1899), makes a contrast to the volumes of Witkowski in its decidely nonsexual interests and its emphasis upon

what the author calls "the spirit of humor as found in our medieval churches."[134] For a darker view one has to turn to chapter 46 of Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1912). "The Gurgoyle: Its Doings" describes how a creature on the tower of Weatherby Church "too human to be called a dragon, too impish to be like a man, too animal to be like a fiend, and not enough like a bird to be called a griffin" discharges its water to destroy the newly placed grave of Fanny Robin.[135] Here the "horrible stone entity" retains its uncanny disquiet, representing a haunting, a return, not just of a distant past but a sinful present, punishing even after death. Hardy understood the gargoyle's dank and destructive power better than the archaeological types like Wildridge. Hardy returns us to the gargoyle as a sign of sin.

There is another visual echo of the Stryge as a sign of sexual inversion in one of the witty vignettes drawn by Aubrey Beardsley for an 1894 volume republishing the *Bon-Mots of Samuel Foote and Theodore Hook* (fig. 277). It shows a man dressed in a suit with a collar and cuff links, from whose head sprouts a single enormous horn. This massive, melancholy dandy takes up exactly the contemplative pose of the demon, with his long, feminine fingernails, even to the point of sticking out a thick, black tongue. Ronald Firbank, who embodied Beardsley's camp vision in *The Flower beneath the Foot* a few decades later, has one of his preciously perverse characters perform this same gesture: "The Prince protruded a shade the purple violet of his tongue."[136] Yet Beardsley's design has a specificity of physiognomy that suggests it is a more pointed caricature. One clue is provided by the text in which it is embedded, presenting a theatrical anecdote culminating in the phrase "by *her praying* so *earnestly for the dead*."[137] Who else can it be with those broad, flabby jowls, deep-set, thoughtful eyes and pert, proud nose but the man whom H. G. Wells described as "a mild and massive Sphinx of British life" and whose play *The Importance of Being Earnest* had recently been such a success—but Oscar Wilde. Beardsley would later insert even nastier hidden caricatures of the writer into the illustrations he made for Wilde's play *Salome*. These visible secrets playfully presented as art cannot help but be implicated in the pathology that locates and measures deformity and degeneration as a science. The free fantasy in Beardsley's vignettes, the curling creaturely transformations of fetuses and faces, fleshy folds and faces, has the same roots as the quantifying calibration of the abnormal; the vignettes are the doubles of those degenerate faces constructed by psychiatry, sexology, and criminology. This particular vignette recalls Basil Hallward's words in Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*: "Sin is a thing that writes itself across a man's face. It cannot be concealed. People talk sometimes of secret vices. There are no such things. If a wretched man has a vice, it shows itself in the lines of his mouth, the droop of his eyelids, the moulding of his hands even."[138]

277. Aubrey Beardsley, vignette from *Bon-Mots of Samuel Foote and Theodore Hook*, 1894, p. 31.

The monster is no longer an unruly mob clamoring at the gates, or even a racial "other" threatening to pollute the purity of Western civilization—the two tropes that we have traced in the nineteenth-century view of the chimeras thus far. This dinner-jacketed chimera has a different cultural location, which will be the place where the monster lurks in the century that follows. "Monsters within postmodernism are already inside—the house, the body, the head, the skin, the nation—and they work their way out."[139] Beardsley made this wonderfully economical drawing only two years before Wilde's trial and incarceration. It is inspired by the moment in February 1895 when the Marquess of Queensbury, furious over his son Alfred Douglas's relationship with the writer, sent a card to Wilde addressed "To Oscar Wilde, posing as a Somdomite [*sic*]." In one of the last reincarnations of the Stryge made during the nineteenth century, the contemplative pose of the greatest demon of Notre-Dame has been given to the century's greatest homosexual.

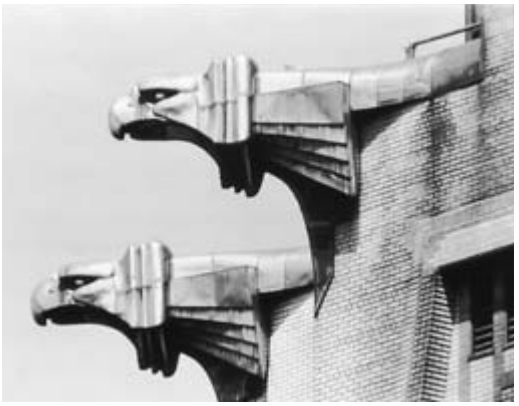
9. Monsters of the Media

THE GARGOYLES IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

"The cathedrals were white. . . . The cathedrals of our own time have not yet been built. The cathedrals belong to other people—to the dead—they are black with grime and worn by centuries. Everything is blackened by soot and eaten away by wear and tear: institutions, education, cities, farms, our lives, our hearts, our thoughts. Nevertheless, everything is potentially new, fresh, in the process of birth. Eyes which are turned away from dead things already are looking forward."[1] In his book *When the Cathedrals Were White* Le Corbusier, one of the most influential architects of the twentieth century, heaps praise upon the United States for its skyscrapers, automobiles, and jazz and in the very midst of his paean describes Notre-Dame de Paris when it was "completely white, dazzling and young—and not black, dirty, old." Of course, the cathedral was never white. Most medieval churches were polychromed both inside and out. But for Le Corbusier, the building boom of the thirteenth century offered a suitable analogy for what he hoped would be a century of architectural and social progress.

Two decades earlier and before he changed his name to Le Corbusier, Charles-Édouard Jeanneret, newly arrived in Paris in 1908, had actually been an avid reader of Viollet-le-Duc. He not only bought and digested the *Dictionnaire* but also devoted a whole sketchbook to the cathedral. The earliest of his sketchbooks to survive contains details of the interior stained glass windows and pinnacles and other decorative elements of the exterior stonework. The gargoyles, however, did not seem to capture his interest.[2] Had he already "turned away from dead things"? The stone monsters represented exactly those forms of moribund excess that the young architect was to criticize, not in the art and architecture of the Middle Ages, but in the detested decorative detail of the nineteenth century.

Ridding the world of gargoyles was not so easy. Architects continued to use them through the early twentieth century, especially in the United States. Their looming presence on neo-Gothic campuses like Princeton and the University of Chicago evoked the scholastic phantoms of the Old World. Gargoyles also stood watch on skyscrapers as guardians of the gleaming new cathedrals of capital. Directly influenced by Notre-Dame, the terra-cotta gargoyles on the Woolworth Building in New



278. Gargoyles on the Chrysler Building, New York, 1928–30.

York City served "to relieve the deadly monotony of geometrical shapes and forms," according to critic G. Leland Hunter, writing in 1914. Hunter also described how "like all modern gargoyles they do not spout even when in the position of water spouts."[3] If gargoyles had been the greatest of gothic machines, engines for the elimination of water, in the machine-age they lost their function.

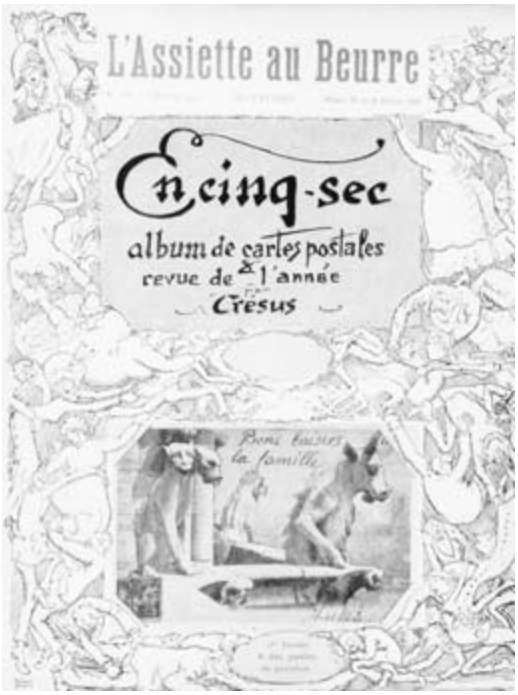
The decaying stone eagles of old empires also took on industrial armor, like the superbly streamlined gargoyles flanking the base of the "spire" of William Van Alen's Chrysler Building in New York, built in 1928–30 (fig. 278). Even these types were, however, eventually cast aside in favor of what was believed to be more functionally honest surfaces. "The only place where the uncanny has rarely felt at home," writes Christoph Grunenberg, "is in the manifestations of Modern architecture which are too bright, too clean, too transparent for the ghosts and memories of the unconscious to hide and unexpectedly resurface in moments of shock and surprise."[4] One of the criticisms of modernist architecture has been precisely its ghostlessness. Without figuration, which manifests a building's capacity to be haunted, the glass cube is rendered unhomely from the beginning—unable to be terrorized by phantom visitations from the past. It can only reflect our present fears. The late eighteenth century had distinguished two kinds of fear: horror and terror. Horror was considered the mind's physical revulsion at a repulsive object, while terror was the mind's imagining that object. While modern architecture was deemed capable of evoking horror, it did not arouse terror, which was lodged in the gaze of the gargoyle. The rejection of the chimerical in modern architecture did not, however, dull the capacity of the chimeras of Notre-Dame to generate and incorporate a variety of modes for apprehending Paris—in effect, to become a lens through which the city was refracted.

If any single twentieth-century personality can be described as the "eye of Paris" (with apologies to Henry Miller and Brassaï) and whose own Stryge-like gaze perme-

ates this necessarily more heterodox chapter, it is Walter Benjamin, in his unfinished *Passagenwerk*, or *Arcades Project* (1928–39). In order to write "Paris the Capital of the Nineteenth Century" he surveyed the spaces of the previous epoch—the arcades, Haussmann's boulevards, the exhibitions and panoramas—not from the demon's distant vantage point but from close up and at second hand. He experienced the city's monuments mostly through old descriptions, illustrations, and postcards he examined at his desk at the Bibliothèque nationale.[5] Although Benjamin reveals an intimate knowledge of Méryon's etching *Le Stryge*, I have found no evidence that the writer ever visited the chimeras on the balustrade of Notre-Dame. Seeing them at second hand, in two-dimensional rather than three-dimensional form, was not only typical of the way the chimeras were experienced in the twentieth century; it was also a feature of modernity that Benjamin explored in his famous 1935 essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." His analysis of the effects of reproduction—exhibition value taking the place of "aura," closeness replacing distance, and seriality, uniqueness—are all relevant for what happens to the chimeras, or rather, their images, in postcards and plaster reproductions, during the twentieth century. Yet one might also argue that these sculptures had been "reproductions" from the beginning, replacing "lost originals" that probably never existed. In this respect their "aura" depended less upon their antiquity or cult value than upon their uncanny aliveness, for, according to Benjamin, "to perceive the aura of an object we look at means to invest it with the ability to look at us in return."[6] In this chapter we shall trace how these products of medieval technology—stone statues carved with a chisel—have been reproduced in ever-larger numbers and have reached ever-larger audiences through new technologies like film and the Internet. Yet as the range of their potential functions is infinitely expanded, the chimeras are not liberated from the burden of having to represent the past. In this respect they are examples of what Benjamin described as archaisms embedded in modern culture: "To the form of the new means of production which in the beginning is still dominated by the old one (Marx) there correspond in the collective consciousness images in which the new is intermingled with the old. These images are wish images, and in them the collective attempts to transcend as well as to illumine the incompletedness of the social order of production."[7]

1 · *The Chimerical Postcard*

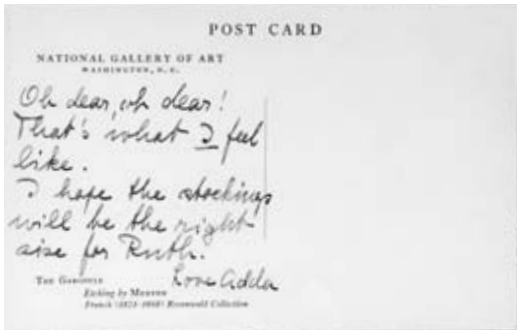
At the beginning of the twentieth century the picture postcard provided a new, democratic means for the circulation of images. It permitted the sender to inscribe a brief message along with an image that could be sent through the improved and cheaper



279. Cover of the *L'Assiette de beurre*, January 1910, reviewing the year in postcards.

280. "Thinking of you deeply": the Stryge postcard's sexual message. From *L'Assiette de beurre*, January 1910.

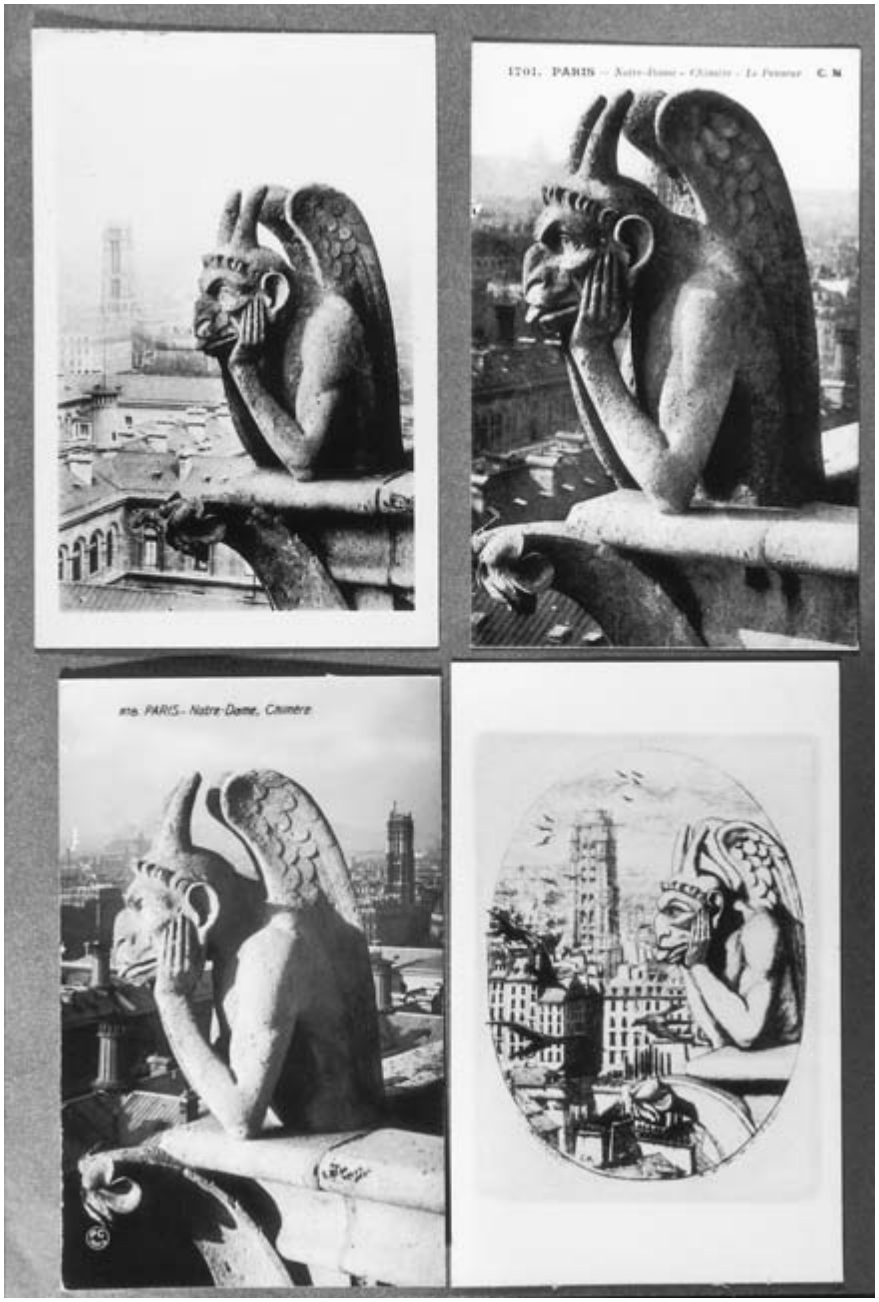
postal services. In an article on postcards written in 1907 James Douglas described them as "a feminine vice. Men do not write postcards to each other." An 1899 article in the *Standard* described "the illustrated postcard craze" as spreading to England from the Continent: "Young ladies who have escaped the philatelic infection or wearied of collecting Christmas cards, have been known to fill albums with missives of this kind received from friends abroad."[8] Paris was postcard paradise and an important center of production as well as sales. In a special issue of the magazine *L'Assiette de beurre* for 1910 a pictorial survey of the year is presented in the form of an imaginary Parisian postcard album. On the cover the chimeras are represented at two removes from reality in a sketch reproducing the popular postcard representing the cow and multiheaded chimeras. It has been inscribed on the front "Love and kisses to all the family"—an ironic message sent "to my parents in the provinces" written in the margin below (fig. 279). On another page the postcard of the Stryge is labeled as sent "from him to her." Inscribed on the front "I am thinking of you deeply," it is signed by a minister who had been involved in a sexual scandal (fig. 280). The charge of the tongue-licking Stryge when sent by a man to a woman must have provided many such opportunities for playful and sometimes sexual self-identification.



281. Back of a postcard of Méryon's *Le Stryge* published by the National Gallery of Art in Washington.

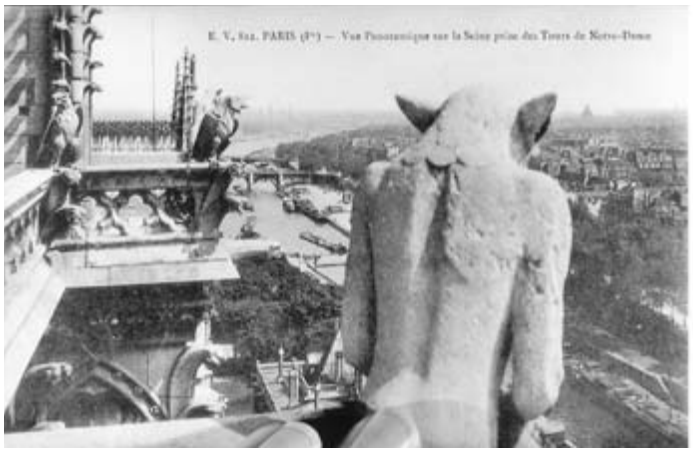
My favorite postcard of the many I have collected of the most famous chimera was sent not from Paris but from Washington, DC, and represents on the front Méryon's etching *Le Stryge*, although it is titled on the back "The Gargoyle." Someone called Adda wrote here in a large, elegant hand "Oh dear, oh dear! That's what *I* feel like. I hope the stockings will be the right size for Ruth" (fig. 281). Not least because of this capacity for identification, for women as well as men, the image of the glum gargoyle of Notre-Dame ranks as one of the most popular postcards of all time, either in Méryon's much-reproduced print or in photographs of the "original." This scribbled message, the momentary deposit of a human relationship as well as a query about shopping, continues the trend of a domestication of the demonic. But it also suggests the ways in which the image of the chimera can become a commodity fetish. In his description of the phantasmagoria of capitalism Marx had argued that one of the fundamental things about commodities was that they appeared "as independent beings endowed with life."[9] Was it this in the melancholy gargoyle's empathetic gaze which made him the most-often-sent postcard of all the ones that featured the cathedral? The fact that tourists often remembered their visit to Notre-Dame by purchasing a view not of the whole Gothic church or any of its sculpted saints, but rather its anti-image, its demon, has less to do with the desanctification of modern life than with its new religion of the commodity.

There are at least four variations of the actual demon in early twentieth-century French postcards. The first photographically re-creates Méryon's etching (fig. 282, *top left*). Titled on its back "Chimère" and produced by the "Éditions des monuments historiques," it has exactly the same viewpoint, with the slightly smaller Tour Saint-Jacques. Below are the ugly flat roofs of the new Hôtel-Dieu, and there are no birds to add brooding atmosphere. A card in the CM series takes a closer view and titles it "Le Penseur," making it a kind of grotesque version of Rodin's famous bronze statue *The Thinker* (fig. 282, *top right*). Another beautiful sepia postcard titled "Chimère" has the Tour Saint-Jacques unusually placed *behind* the creature's wings, as though it



282. Four *Stryges*. Three old French postcards and the front of the National Gallery postcard of Méryon's *Le Stryge*, called "The Gargoyle." (Photo: author.)

283. "Notre Dame chimère." Postcard, ND series.



284. "Vue panoramique sur la Seine prise des Tours de Notre-Dame," taken over the shoulder of the falcon-headed demon (no. 25). Postcard, EV Series.

were turning away from one of the symbols of medieval Paris, to refute the authority of that foundational composition in the nineteenth century and modernize it (fig. 282, *bottom left*). The fourth, in a horizontal format, is datable to the thirties, when the Tour Saint-Jacques was being restored under scaffolding, and presents a horizontal view in which the demon lurches out to the left over the wide cityscape that includes the Sacre Coeur on the hill of Montmartre (fig. 283). This is one of the ND series—the letters referring to one of the most prolific and popular Parisian postcard companies, Lévy-Neurdein.

Creating some ten thousand views of the city from all viewpoints and angles, this series produced an emphasis upon what Naomi Schor calls "the ground zero of a Parisian self-representation and panoramic totalization—Hugo's famous circular sweep from the towers of Notre Dame."[10] In the LL series the emphasis is not on

the old but on Haussmann's Paris, beginning with the Arc de Triomphe and the new boulevards of the Right Bank. The chimeras appear in this series as spectators of the city brooding over its widening gyre. In one postcard titled "Vue panoramique" we look over the shoulder of one of the unicorn demons on the southern tower toward the Left Bank (fig. 284). The chimeras become in a sense the very emblems of the pleasure of spectacle. Another ND series monumentalized each of the chimeras without frames, while the later AP series emphasized their increasing decay. Just as postcards made it possible to collect portraits of exotic, unknown native peoples, the strange and invisible grotesques colonizing their own cathedral came to be known to Parisians. The fact that they are numbered suggests one could collect the whole series, and one can still find these powerfully auric images in the stalls of the *bouquinistes* that line the Seine near Notre-Dame. Isolated, they become "personalities" of Paris, rather like a series celebrating the various métiers of the city—the ragpicker, the glass seller.

Perhaps the most unusual postcards ever made of Notre-Dame is a series called "Les Monstres des cathédrales" produced during the First World War, in which six of Viollet-le-Duc's chimeras are transformed into grotesque portraits of the reviled German enemy (figs. 285–90). The chimeras must have been well known by this date, in the form of the standard postcard series, for them to be parodied in this fashion. The first and most well known is the Stryge, who becomes Kaiser Wilhelm himself, "Guillaume II" (fig. 285), with the addition of a handlebar moustache and an imperial helmet. The caption below describes this as "the greatest monster, Satan under the guise of a messenger of God, who has unleashed the horrible war which has bloodied Europe and ordered all sacrileges." The second in the series is an adaptation of the devouring beast often called "la Rongeur" by the French (no. 14) who becomes "the sinister predator" Franz Joseph, who "not content with having suffocated Bosnia Herzegovina, Trent, and Trieste, now wants to devour Serbia" (fig. 286). The third is a brilliant distortion of the unicorn demon (no. 21), which I have compared to medicalized images of cretins and whose hunched form and chinless face are here also linked to theories of degeneracy. "The Crown Prince" is called "the odious, incapable ambitious imbecile" and "the complicit assassin of a degenerate father" (fig. 287). The rest of the set represents famous German generals who led the offensive in northern France. Number 4 has the portrait of Helmuth von Moltke, "whose barbarian hordes have put courageous Belgium to blood and fire," grafted onto the falcon-headed Horus (no. 25; fig. 288). The fact that these monsters are based on the demons carved on a Gothic cathedral takes on an added irony with the last two generals, who are described as destroying the medieval patrimony of France.[11] The shaggy-loined demon (no. 40) becomes Alexander von Kluck, who

285. "Les Monstres des cathédrales," no. 1, "Kaiser Wilhelm II." First World War French postcard.

286. "Les Monstres des cathédrales," no. 2, "Franz Joseph." First World War French postcard.

287. "Les Monstres des cathédrales," no. 3, "The Crown Prince." First World War French postcard.

288. "Les Monstres des cathédrales," no. 4, "Von Moltke." First World War French postcard.

289. "Les Monstres des cathédrales," no. 5, "Von Kluck." First World War French postcard.

290. "Les Monstres des cathédrales," no. 6, "Von Bülow." First World War French postcard.

"out of spite pitilessly bombarded Soissons" (fig. 289). Even more shocking to the French was the bombardment of Reims Cathedral during the Battle of the Marne in September 1914. The sixth monster of the cathedrals is Karl von Bülow, whose grim features have been added to the bald and long-eared demon squashing a toad (no. 54; fig. 290). The caption describes him as "the bloody brute who, chased from Reims, in order to assuage his anger has destroyed the marvelous cathedral, odious crime." If proof were needed that the forms of these statues were meant to represent "the other" from the very beginning and that they continued to be the site where people projected evil—it is these six postcards.

The ephemeral and yet highly symbolic status of picture postcards soon made them part of the ethnographic phantasmagoria of modernity admired by the surrealists. In an article on postcards in the surrealist review *Minotaure* published in 1933, Paul Éluard wrote that "treasures of nothing at all, the taste of which is given to children through chromolithographs, stamps, coffee labels, the catechism, chocolate, or by those, produced in series, that are distributed by the large department stores, postcards appeal to great persons by their naïveté and, what's more, alas, by the fundamental equality that they establish between the sender and the receiver."[12] This last lamented democratization is a crucial difference between the reproduced chimera and the original sculpture. The statue places the viewer in the subject position of rapt devotee or pilgrim before the sublime wall of stone whereas the postcard not only brings Adda and the recipient of her card together but also allows them to identify with the image printed on it.

II · *Dark Gargoyles: Surrealism, Fascism, and the Occult*

> The citizens of Paris, young and old, men and women alike, went to sleep on winter nights of wind and rain wondering more than once in a lifetime how the monsters were faring along the roofline of Notre-Dame. Whether they left their posts when all the light of the city went out and crawled to a dark corner out of the rain or snow?
>
> SACHEVERELL SITWELL, *Gothic Europe*[13]

Every night darkness falls upon the chimeras. The Yvon series of postcards from the thirties presents retouched, almost painterly chimeras whose blackness glints like flesh rather than with the abstraction of the leering silhouette (fig. 291). During the Middle Ages medieval cities closed up "like a ship's crew preparing to face a gathering storm" and the statues slept shrouded in darkness, but one of the transformations of modernity was that the city never slept. Paris, as the "city of lights," tortured its

291. Dark chimeras over Paris, late 1920s. Postcard, Yvon series.

stone inhabitants by having gas and then electric lights illuminating them constantly. In the sixties there was even a nightly "son et lumière" show called "The Fairyland of Notre-Dame" at 9:30 every night between May and October, in which the whole facade of the cathedral was lit up and its different parts dramatized to show "how it has been part of the French soul for eight hundred years."[14] In 1930 a newsreel showed Notre-Dame surrounded by floodlights, celebrating the city that never sleeps even unto its oldest stones. But in the years that followed it was not light but darkness that fell over the chimeras, transforming them into symbols of the crisis of historical objects in modernity. People no longer remembered that they had been part of Viollet-le-Duc's restoration, and as the tourist topography of Paris moved toward Montmartre and the Left Bank, the chimeras were marooned on the island in the Seine, like shipwrecked monsters from a previous age. The Baedeker guide of 1931 admitted that "today the Île-de-la-Cité is no longer the center of Paris."[15] Yet in their mythic marginality to the modern city the chimeras came to interest the surrealists, whose interest was sparked by the very same traits that linked the sculptures to the atavistic trends in Fascism. What appealed both to André Breton's libertarian mysticism and to the Fascist's celebration of the outmoded was their inherent mystery as mnemic traces ambiguously lodged between the medieval and the modern. As stone throwbacks to an earlier medieval age when God and the devil coexisted they were modern myths. Three seemingly diverse cultural trends in Paris of the thirties—surrealism, Fascism, and the occult—were united both in their need to resurrect a submerged past and by their fascination with the gargoyle.

One of the most haunting and powerful twentieth-century images of the chimeras captures them at night, lit by the city itself and not by the sun or moon. It is a photograph taken by the Hungarian photographer Brassaï, whom Henry Miller called "the

eye of Paris" and who would become famous for his views of the sulfurous, gaslit nightlife of the city. Seeking Victor Hugo's expansive "bird's-eye view" but under the cover of darkness, he described in *The Secret Paris of the 30's* how he got his shot: "One winter day in 1932, I got the urge to climb to the top of Notre Dame at night. 'The concierge is on the second floor' they told me at the entrance. So I climbed up—200 steps—and between two groups of tourists, I confronted the woman who watched over Notre Dame. 'Climb up here at night, sir? It's unheard of! It's out of the question. We're a national museum, just like the Louvre. And we close at five!'"[16] That it is a woman watching over Notre-Dame, a homely, all-seeing figure like a "concierge," is itself fascinating. Brassaï bribed her, and she met him at 10:00 p.m. to conduct him up to the towers. "We climbed the spiral staircase. It was totally dark; the climb lasted an eternity. At last we reached the open platform. Completely out of breath, my accomplice collapsed into her chair. Impatient, enraptured, I ran beside the balustrade. It was more beautiful than I had imagined! The dark, indefinable shapes were black as night, the fog over Paris was milk white! Scarcely discernible, the Hôtel Dieu, the Tour Saint-Jacques, the Quartier Latin, the Sorbonne, were luminous and sombre shapes. . . . Paris was ageless, bodiless. . . . Present and past, history and legend, intermingled. Atop this cathedral, I expected to meet Quasimodo the bellringer around some corner. . . . 'It's marvellous, marvellous,' I kept exclaiming to myself. 'Isn't it sir?' the fat woman replied, brimming with pride at being the concierge of Notre Dame." Leaving the breathless guardian behind, he climbed up the rest of the stairs to the tower, where he stepped on a dead pigeon, an uncanny moment in the midst of what is essentially a re-creation of Hugo's nineteenth-century experience of the sublime panorama. What made this a surreal vision?

The one condition of his visit demanded by the concierge was that he not show any lights in case the police should spot him from the nearby prefecture. This prohibition had the unexpected consequence of reversing the usual light-and-dark relations that had defined the chimeras since 1853. One of the photographs made that night shows only the dark silhouette of the demon and the other beasts, including the unmistakable outline of the pensive demon. An eerie fluorescent glow wafts up from below, suggesting that the infernal space of hell is far below in the streets of the city. The medieval tower of Saint-Jacques seems lost in the vaporous haze. Light is here emblematic of the evanescence of modernity as against the obdurate authority of the stonework. This image, cropped at the right to isolate the demon as the sole spectator, appeared in a double-page spread of photographs in an issue of the surrealist review *Minotaure* in 1935 (figs. 292–293). Here two views of the shrouded bird and the pensive demon use their shadowy outlines as fragments of an unearthly menace, looming over the city. Some critics have seen the demon's presence in Brassaï's image as nonthreatening: "The casual, almost languid way his head is cupped in his hands as

292. Photograph by Brassaï reproduced in *Minotaure*, no. 7, 1935, p. 71. (© Estate Brassaï-RMN. Photo: Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, NY.)

293. Photograph by Brassaï reproduced in *Minotaure*, no. 7, 1935, p. 71. (© Estate Brassaï-RMN. Photo: Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, NY.)

he contemplates the city is really comical."[17] More inscrutable than comic, in my view, the devil, now shrouded in darkness, is both the subject and the object of a secret Paris. The caption in the *Minotaure* spread underlines that "under the flashlight the secrets of night are revealed."[18] The top photograph, of the shrouded vulture looking over an even more luminous glow, works to the same effect. In a book on occult and fringe groups in postwar Paris this same view of the shrouded bird in daylight was captioned "Du haut de Notre-Dame l'Ange du Bizarre règne sur Paris."[19] The devil of Notre-Dame stands for the photographer himself in his omniscient power. His book *The Secret Paris of the 30's* opens with the view from Notre-Dame and the story of the concierge. This recontextualization of the photographs allows Brassaï to frame them in terms of a surrealist ethnography, in which he sought, as he states in the introduction, to glimpse a "secret, suspicious world closed to the uninitiated."[20] The demon is literally the guardian of the city of "Sodom and Gomorrah" which unfolds in the rest of the photographs in the book. Here Brassaï documented another

aspect of the city's noctural life—the brothels and night cafés frequented by homosexuals and prostitutes.

For the surrealists the monuments of the city became simultaneously both sites for the projection of fantasy and emblems of the bizarre. Louis Aragon in his *Le Paysan de Paris* associated old buildings with the unconscious repressed by the modernization that was Haussmannization. André Breton wrote of his admiration for Méryon's *Le Stryge*, and, like Méryon, these artists and writers looked at the medieval traces of an old Paris as the return of the repressed. "For the outmoded not only recalls the present to the past; it may also return the past to the present, in which case it often assumes a demonic guise."[21] Aragon's descriptions of the arcades include images of "sirens" and "sphinxes" that suddenly appear like vestiges of a deep, dark past in the midst of modernity.[22] They are like the monstrous heads of birds, jaws of dragons, and reptilian wings which invade the bourgeois drawing rooms in Max Ernst's collage novels, such as *Une Semaine de bonté*, published in 1934.[23] Breton reproduced Brassaï's view of the Tour Saint-Jacques covered in scaffolding at night in his *L'Amour fou* (1937), describing it as not only "swaying like a sunflower" but also as "the world's greatest monument to the hidden."[24] In his famous reply to a 1933 questionaire about what a surrealist de-Haussmannization of Paris might do to its great monuments, Breton suggested that the Opéra become a foundation for perfumes and that the towers of Notre-Dame be replaced by "an immense oil and vinegar cruet, one flask filled with blood, the other with sperm," adding that he thought the building might serve as "a sexual school for virgins."[25] This profanation of the sacred continues the long tradition we have traced of gendering the cathedral's excess as female, but here, significantly, in filling one of the towers with sperm, Breton erects an orgasmic masculine Gothic. Hal Foster has suggested that as against the modernist "machine for living in," surrealism presented architecture as a hysterical female body: "Surrealism is about *desire*: in order to allow it back into architecture it fixes on the outmoded and the ornamental, the very forms tabooed in . . . functionalism, associated as they became, not only with the historical and the fantastic, but with the infantile and the feminine."[26]

This aspect of surrealism can be observed in two collages created by the writer and filmmaker Jacques Prévert with the ironic title *Souvenirs de Paris*. Both utilize the same color postcard of the Stryge produced by A. Mercier in the fifties. The first adds two tiny children from a Victorian chromolithograph to the archetypal postcard, a little girl with a spyglass and a boy sitting aside the demon's wings, in a play upon the childlike tourist gaze (fig. 294). The second collage superimposes upon the demon's pensive face the wide-eyed face of a female clown with big red lips. A second postcard has been stuck on top of the first so as to situate the statue's arm in its usual contemplative position (fig. 295). The tyranny of the clichéd image

294. Jacques Prévert, *Souvenir de Paris V*. Fragments of chromolithographs on a color postcard of "the gargoyle of Notre-Dame" by A. Mercier. BNF. (Photo: ARS New York/ADAGP, Paris.)

295. Jacques Prévert, *Souvenir de Paris I*. Fragments of chromolithographs on a color postcard by A. Mercier. BNF. (Photo: ARS, New York/ADAGP, Paris.)

is broken, and a figure who has always looked away now regards us with glee. The second collage was published in Prévert's collection *Fatras* (1966), the title of which derived from the word *fatrasie*, which were medieval nonsense poems composed of strange combinations of words and objects, and thus in a sense returning the modern gargoyle to a medieval context of hybridity. Undermining the nostalgic aura of the postcard, Prévert's antisouvenir shocks us by rechimerifying the chimera.[27] Here, as in his scripts for films like *Les Enfants du Paradis*, Prévert was able to combine profound archetypes and popular entertainment, "the more savant and the more scandalous or commercial rehearsals of the city . . . in an unending carnival procession."[28] If Brassaï's photographs of the demon employed a far more typical surrealist strategy of the arcane, phallic gaze that sought to feminize the city in order to penetrate its secrets, these two collages by Prévert subject one of the icons of Paris to the more polymorphously perverse play of the popular.

Surrealism exploited the uncanny so as to disrupt the present and open up the future, whereas Fascism exploited the same thing "in order to lock both present and future into a tragic repetition of atavistic psychic and social structures, a repetition governed by the death drive."[29] The shadowy outlining of the chimeras against a darkening or dusky sky became very popular in postcards of the early thirties. Naomi Schor has described how "the representation of the chimera of Notre-Dame set against the Paris skyline—a topos of Paris photography from its origins to the

present—attests to the passage from a euphoric diurnal to a dysphoric nocturnal regime of self-representation."[30] But this dark night enjoyed by the surrealist flaneur—the artist of modernity in his bittersweet quest for the past—was about to be engulfed in a darker apocalypse. The chimeras as signs of evil must have seemed unbearable as they bore down on the city during its darkest days, between 1941 and 1944, when Paris was under Nazi occupation. Hitler's famous sightseeing tour, in which he posed for photographs before the Eiffel Tower and at Napoléon's Tomb at Les Invalides, did not include Notre-Dame, reflecting its loss of centrality, at least in the Fascist tourist's imaginary of Paris. But Notre-Dame was not forgotten by devout Parisians, who kept a votive candle burning day and night during the occupation, before a famous medieval statue of the Virgin and Child in one of the chapels, supplicating "Notre Dame" for deliverance from evil. Outside, the shapes that loomed overhead in the blackness of the curfew, above the sandbags piled up against the portals, would have seemed to them quite changed. An ominous afterglow of the eagles of Viollet-le-Duc was the appropriation of their geometric clarity and imperial authority by the art of the Third Reich, which was stylistically retrograde and sought models from a century before. On 7 March 1936 Hitler decreed that the eagle appear on the arms of the Third Reich, its head turned to the left. "The eagle did not speak of power or of the sign; it *is* power, pure power, immediate hypnotic power," as Alain Boureau points out in his study of the eagle as a political sign of various regimes.[31] Did this mean that the sculpted eagles that had spread their wings over the city for a hundred years already as demonic signs of evil were suddenly, for many bystanders, changed into more particular signs of enemy oppression? Whereas in the fin de siècle it was the chimeras' feminine traits that had stood out, now the signs of masculine force, their torpedo-like beaks and bulging muscles, became salient through their similarity to the armored chests and biceps in statues of Nazi sculptors like Arno Breker and Josef Thorak. There are photographs of Nazi storm troopers below the cathedral, whose outstretched salutes echo the projecting forms of the gargoyles in the distance.

Moreover, their anti-Semitism—something that had always been part of their charge—resurfaced in ways that had not been previously imaginable. One of the most successful works of art on display at the large anti-Jewish exhibition held in Paris at the Palais Berlitz in 1941, Le Juif et la France, was a vast carved bust which bore an uncanny resemblance to the most famous gargoyle of Notre-Dame (fig. 296).[32] It was part of a sequence called "How to recognize a Jew" that allowed visitors to feel the different parts of this face, which were numbered and captioned—for example, the nose, number 3, "strongly converse with large nostrils." That racial traits could be seen and recognized was crucial. During this very period thirteen thousand Jewish citizens were rounded up and sent to concentration camps. But what is most telling

296. The demon's nose: an anti-Jewish exhibition at the Palais Berlitz, 1941. (Photo: Roger Viollet.)

about this disturbing photograph of bourgeois Paris feeling this demonic face, its ears and eyes even the cranial outline, is that it is part of the continuity of the tradition of physiognomy that stretched back to Lavater and Le Brun as well as to Daumier and Grandville. For already nearly a hundred years a similarly anti-Semitic image had been staring down at Parisians from their mother church—an image that in its original context, however, had not until this moment sanctioned actual genocide.

If the original anti-Semitic message of the demon had been mostly forgotten by the start of the Second World War, this was partly due to the way the cathedrals had come to stand for something ineffable rather than social, something sacred in a vaguely spiritual rather than an orthodox Catholic sense. This very mystification, which drained any historical sense from the chimeras at the same time that it gave them the authority of the mystery, was part of the same celebratory forgetting that was Fascism. Although religious practice was beginning its inexorable decline in this period, the cathedral had become the focus of another deeply felt but nonetheless reactionary vision of the cathedral—that brand of pseudoscientific occultism that is still strangely powerful in that land of the rational. Reaching its apogee in the twenties and thirties, the tradition of what the French call *ésotérisme* had a complex intellectual origin. Seeking to find a "key" to the cathedral, a cabalistic pursuit of the "lost letters" and hieroglyphs of the edifice went back to the Esprit Gobineau de Montluisant's 1640 tract arguing that Notre-Dame had been saved from destruction throughout its history by a series of alchemical signs embedded in its fabric, which

were also keys to discovering the philosopher's stone.[33] For devotees this occult process explained why a German bomb had only slightly pierced its roof during the First World War. Rather than being built to celebrate the Christian liturgy, the cathedral was constructed as a massive symbolic machine by alchemists and Freemasons to hold eternal, pre-Christian secrets and powers that could be tapped and manipulated by the initiated. If God was dead and Notre-Dame had become a temple to unreason, the devil was dead, too, and the gargoyles and chimeras were stranded on a great ship of symbols, useless and defanged.

This occult approach was as popular in France as works of traditional scholarship published during these years. The first modern archaeological monograph on the cathedral, by Marcel Aubert, was published in 1928.[34] Two years before, a far more widely read volume appeared—*Le Mystère des cathédrales et l'interprétation ésotérique des symboles hermétiques du grand oeuvre*, by an author who signed himself Fulcanelli.[35] The first argued that the cathedral was a masterpiece of rational order and clarity, transparent to modern scientific and historical understanding. The second argued that the cathedral was an enigmatic puzzle, containing keys to mysterious, occult knowledge going back millenia. Both scholars downplayed the religious aspect of Notre-Dame, one to make it a French architectural masterpiece, the other to make it a universal, magical symbol. If Aubert's vision was nationalistic, modernist, and positivist, Fulcanelli's was nostalgic and antiscientific. He called the cathedral's "stone sphinxes" teachers, crucial to those seeking initiation into the mysteries: "This people of spiky chimeras, grotesques, marmosets, menacing gargoyles—dragons, stryges, and *tarasques*—is the secular guardian of our ancestral heritage. . . . In this respect Notre-Dame is the philosophical church."[36]

The kind of philosophy that Fulcanelli refers to was not the form of scholasticism that was first argued in the shadows of the cathedral in the late twelfth century, but a notion of the "secret" at the center of all arcane thought. Esoteric philosophy, while certainly a crucial part of the intellectual tradition of the West, has had a dangerous afterlife in modernity, always running the risk of occluding history through mystification. Aubert, for example, is careful to point out that the chimeras are the work of Viollet-le-Duc, whose archaeological work during the restoration forms the crucial basis of his own recovery of medieval architectural meaning. But for Fulcanelli the chimeras become part of the cathedral's timeless secret language. While he is aware that the edifice has suffered mutilations, he is negative about all efforts of science to rescue it. Mentioning the "eminent architects . . . Toussaint, Geoffroy-Dechaume, Boeswillwald, Viollet-le-Duc, and Lassus, who restored the basilica," Fulcanelli states that "science will never rediscover what it has lost."[37] Only he can reveal to the "amateur of the occult" that "it is not impossible to rediscover the arcane

meanings dissimulated underneath the petrified bark of this prodigious *grimoire*." We cannot ignore these writings, as most art historians have done, since they have had dangerously ahistorical effects. The most telling of these aporias produced by an esoteric "reading" is Fulcanelli's denial of any political or social meaning. Calling the only human among the chimeras, the bearded Jew, "the alchemist of Notre-Dame" is a way of occluding his real history—a way of forgetting its ostensible and totally unmysterious anti-Semitic charge.[38] The attraction of Fulcanelli and all his followers, who continue to produce countless volumes each year celebrating Gothic cathedrals as sites of "New Age" spirituality, is that they provide some closure for the frenzy of interpretation. Art historians have shared in this obsession with the idea of interpretation: the notion that every element in the medieval building had its secrets and we can find the key in this or that text or historical event. Both iconography and *ésotérisme* are thus equally problematic methods of interpretation rooted in the Enlightenment belief in the transparency of meaning. The only difference between our urge to interpret and that of the esoterist is that we are sanctioned by being officially funded by public institutions such as universities, while they gain their prestige through being marginal and still, in a sense, thrillingly secret.

There is another, more left-leaning version of the esoteric view of Notre-Dame linked to the builders themselves. This can best be seen today by visiting the bookshop specializing in the history of *compagnonnage*, the Librairie de Compagnonnage, just across the Seine from Notre-Dame on the Right Bank. With its origins in the nineteenth-century worker's guilds, with their strong tradition of craft secrets, as well as in the Freemasons, a group that is still very powerful in France, this tradition of interpreting medieval religious architecture is also antiecclesiastical. It focuses upon the builders themselves as holders of the key to divine rituals and mysteries, with paths back through the Templars to the Holy Grail.[39] It, too, ends in the negative theology of empty mystery but still influences how the cathedrals are viewed as buildings by the French public today. With its roots going back into the *compagnonnage* tradition, the belief that the makers of the cathedrals held some secret key to the universe has led to some wonderfully outlandish interpretations. In Maurice Guignard's *Notre-Dame de Paris ou la magie des Templiers* (1972) the cathedral becomes a cosmic antenna receiving influences from the universe through the power of celestial numbers. Even the demon is drawn into this game to become yet another cosmic magnet, like the Pyramids and Stonehenge, a universal "key" (fig. 297).

297. *Le Stryge* as an esoteric symbol. From Maurice Guignard, *Notre-Dame de Paris ou la magie des Templiers*, 1972.

As recently as 1988 a lavish series of color photographs of the chimeras, accompanied by an essay by the "historian of the psyche" Salomon Resnick, appeared in the glossy art magazine *FMR* with a strongly mystical interpretation. It did not matter that some of the photographs, and the Stryge himself, appear reversed; these "petri-

fied nightmares," as Resnick describes them, are not specific statues but archetypes, creatures from the originary forest of symbols that guard the "ancestral dream." They are described as "mediators between the spirit of the world and the spirit of the cathedral, between exoteric space and esoteric space," whatever that means. In a replay of late nineteenth-century metaphors Resnick describes the whole cathedral as being "like an old woman, with the traits of a crow, closing its eyes and lifting itself in space, grasping the edge of the precipice with a metaphysical grimace." In typical terms of the French tradition of *ésotérisme* the chimeras represent the means by which urban civilization might "recuperate the energy of the primitive world it has dismembered and destroyed."[40] A more profound cultural critic, Theodor Adorno, described the pseudospirituality of Wagner's operas as myths in which "the opacity and omnipotence of the social process is then celebrated as a metaphysical mystery," and Resnick's esoteric approach to medieval architecture strikes me as serving exactly the same vapid, mystificatory function.[41] The rational monster of Viollet-le-Duc, which became an emblem of the romantic and the irrational so soon after his creation, has never been so "rationally" misinterpreted as it has been in the twentieth century. This is true in the religious sphere of the church's operations, too. In 1998 an article in the *New York Times* titled, significantly, "Shaded by Gargoyles" described how the official exorcist of Notre-Dame, Father Nicholas, sees up to a dozen people a day who believe they are possessed by the devil. As a result of social and cultural dislocation and the rise of sects and cults dealing in spiritism, France has five times more exorcists than twenty years ago, one in each diocese. But according to today's exorcist, "it is Notre-Dame . . . with its mighty Gothic vaults, rows of gargoyles including some in the form of the devil himself, which has special drawing powers."[42]

In a book published in 1952 Notre-Dame is seen in the topos of a monument withstanding all attacks, and as a witness to the victory of faith over barbarism, of freedom over tyranny. For this writer "the façade is France." "It withstood the Nazis, who marched onto the Parvis in 1940. It merely rose upward before them, a serene and massive lesson in history, unconquerable and silent." This book concludes with a rousing description of the liberation of Paris in August 1944, when the tanks of General Jacques-Philippe Leclerc drove straight onto the parvis, and his victorious troops rushed up the turning stair of the tower, to set the enormous clapper in motion: "And among the bells, on the high open terrace between the towers, where the sky is alive with birds, and sunlight revels on golden stone, and gargoyles stretch their long necks outward, could be heard the laughter of the Virgin, singing to her city and her nation, to all the world, that mankind is again in a Romanesque, approaching a Gothic phase, and that of all the gods emerging from the Dark Age sleep, the Goddess of Idealism will command the most lovely cathedrals."[43] These words are not those of a French-

man, but of an American, Allan Temko. His enthusiastic anthropomorphic hymn to the (still feminized) cathedral seeks to lift it out of the nineteenth century's dark mysteries and into the light like a transparent skyscraper, cleansing it of those crypto-Fascist associations that had stained its stones in recent decades. For this viewer of the thrusting height and majesty of the west front, "as the wall leaps higher, higher, impossibly higher, Notre Dame reveals its secret. It possesses the essential variety of life itself. . . . The lavish, squandered variety, carved into the stone, joins with the total design to soothe, delight, enchant, and ravish, rather than disturb."[44]

III · *White Gargoyles: American Gothic from Winslow Homer to Disney*

> From the whiteness of skin results the fact that it has no shadow, no value: made up of a tissue equal to itself in all its points, [white] skin shows more than any other skin—with the exception of certain black-blue epidermises—that bodies are not volumes, that there are only surfaces.
>
> FRANÇOIS LYOTARD, *Le Mur du Pacifique*[45]

The contemporary French philosopher François Lyotard sees the United States as a stretch of uninterrupted white skin, a blank surface without the wrinkles of history or dark aporias of pasts where medieval monsters can lurk. When Americans first became interested in gargoyles, it was as signs of this dark other, as the ghosts of a gloomy continent they had left behind. To trace the interest in the chimeras of Notre-Dame for American visitors to Paris and in America itself we have to go back in time, to just a few years after the restoration of the cathedral was completed. As early as 1867 a young American painter in Paris was up on the balustrade among the gargoyles making sketches, but what he saw with his own eyes was mediated through the already-constructed ideals created by French artists who had stood in the same highly charged spot. Winslow Homer's *Gargoyles of Notre Dame* (fig. 298) may have drawn upon Charles Nègre's 1853 photograph but probably owes more to Méryon, whose works were already avidly collected in America.[46] Homer portrayed his friend Kelsey on the balustrade with his hand on his chin as a human Stryge, not out on the edge with the other monsters, but behind one of the great birds. With none of the playful self-irony of Le Secq's photograph of Nègre in a similar position, the painting seems overdetermined and lacking any sense of the uncanny which is so powerful in the early photographs. Clearly, not all artists who sought out this site as a stage for visual exploration were successful.

298. Winslow Homer, *Gargoyles of Notre Dame*, 1867. Oil on canvas. Private collection.

In the opening years of the century another American, the nineteen-year-old photographic prodigy Alvin Langdon Coburn (1882–1966) made *Le Stryge de Notre-*

299. Alvin Langdon Coburn, *Le Stryge de Notre-Dame*, 1910. Photogravure.

Dame in homage to Méryon's etching (fig. 299).[47] His image was also technically akin to Méryon's, in that the print was produced from an inked plate in the process known as photogravure, in which a photographic image is transferred onto a metal plate. Combining photography with the printmaking process made it a graphic art which suited the pictorialist aims of the young artist. But on the compositional rather than the technical level Coburn's image has neither enough of the knuckled masonry of the building visible, nor enough of Paris to suggest the usual haunting presence of something that was not human. Unlike Méryon's *Le Stryge*, Coburn's version seems more placidly mournful than sinister. When not haunted by clichés, Coburn took a more interesting view from the balustrade of the cow chimera with the city in the distance.[48] Both Coburn and Homer were relatively young American artists, struggling under the weight of a European tradition they literally stood within but seemed unable to get beyond. It is as though they could not see the ghosts haunting someone else's home. Their images seem like séances, unable to conjure up anything but smoky atmospheric tricks.

The fact that the Middle Ages is an absence, missing from American culture, that there were no medieval churches, abbeys, and castles to argue about restoring or destroying, had not prevented the Gothic revival from having a powerful impact in the New World. With no ruins to resurrect, with no demons and devils, dungeons and Inquisitions to exorcise from the conscience, these could be created immediately and quickly in new spaces like the home, which in the work of writers like Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allan Poe became the haunted ruin, the dark castle of the American psyche. The United States from the very beginning sought its Moyen Âge "ready made." Both the foundations—the dungeons of American Gothic—and its

highest aspirations, its spires, were built out of the sublime aesthetics of romanticism and the eighteenth-century Gothic revival, bypassing any need to refer to the actual crumbling stone of some sedimentary "original" layer. When Poe's stories traveled from across the Atlantic to influence Baudelaire and Charles Méryon's darkest visions, what made them so fresh, so liberating, was their having to conjure the horror from the depths of the human mind rather than from representations already carved in Europe's old stones. This nostalgia for something that was never possessed, quite different from the loss that a European felt looking at the ruins of an old world under the modern, new one, gave American Gothic an astounding capacity to invent and imagine the most dystopic of horrors. It also meant that no historical distinctions were needed to separate the chimeras of Notre-Dame and original thirteenth-century gargoyles. All is new in the New World, even the relics of the old one. This helps explain the fascination that American writers, artists, and tourists had with the chimeras of Notre-Dame. Precisely because they were already modern, ready made, and recent Gothic creations, they seemed to speak directly to their own lack of, desire for, and simultaneous fear of authenticity. What would provide the lifeblood of American Gothic, however, and the stimulus to much of the art of the second half of the twentieth century, was not these phantoms in the ruins of Europe, but those ghouls haunting their new houses back home.[49]

This emptiness is exemplified in the work of the American printmaker John Taylor Arms (1887–1953). He made six major etchings of the chimeras of Notre-Dame and described how they were the motivation behind his *Gargoyle Series:* "Magnificent in design and beautiful in execution they are a never-ending source of interest to the student of medieval architecture and a never-failing temptation to the pencil of the draughtsman. Year after year I have gone back to the 'Stryge' and his companions, brooding over the Paris of to-day as they did over the city of yesterday, and always I find in them, and in their fellows throughout the land, fresh beauties and conceptions hitherto unrevealed to me."[50] Dorothy Noyes Arms later referred to her husband as a man born out of his time, "a modern medievalist—in this hurried twentieth century."[51] The very first of the series was *Le Penseur de Notre Dame* of 1923, which he began as soon as he landed in Europe (fig. 300). It was clearly based on his knowledge of Méryon's etching and the version of another American artist, Joseph Pennell, which similarly reverses the figure so that it faces right in the print (fig. 275). As Mrs. Arms later described, "J. T.'s fingers had ached for years to make this particular drawing. It was made during our first trip to Europe together; we were young, carefree, and the world was a safe and joyous place . . . and I hear the custodian's voice telling us tales of her father and Meryon." This retrospective glance is

300. John Taylor Arms, *Le Penseur de Notre Dame*, 1923. Etching and stipple.

seen as animating the American's conception of the figure, as though identifying his own outsider status as a medieval spirit stranded in a philistine world of modernity: "For this famous gargoyle of Notre Dame is a being, not an inanimate thing, who protrudes his tongue evertlastingly at what he sees. Whether this is in distain of the modern city below, which he guards while yet despising it; or whether of the feverish life of to-day, so far removed from the tempo of his own age; or whether of the unimportance of all things, as visioned by the centuries, will remain always a matter for conjecture."[52]

Arms was careful to avoid losing the intensity of the subject in the mass of the city below, which is what happened to Pennell. He kept the ledge and the edge, making the stone balustrade a crucial angle at the base of the composition. This helps connect us to the demon. We share his space as we do not in Méryon's much more distant and fractured treatment, which is evidence of the beginning of the twentieth-century domestication of the demon. By the time Arms was working the statue was nearly seventy years old. This is the main difference between the nineteenth- and the twentieth-century etcher's vision of the demon—the way in which Méryon treated the surface of the statue as though it were flesh and not stone. The dark malignity that suffuses the older work is partly due to this crisp sharpness, which is lost in the softer, gentler strokes of Arms, who obsesses about every dent and crack. Its mottled skin, its flaky decay in the light of day, is the main effect evoked by the twentieth-century print. If the surrealist response to the chimeras had been, like Brassaï's, to shroud them in darkness, Arms's urge was to whiten them. At a moment when the gesture of image making, whether in paint or print, was disintegrating in American culture, artists like Arms clung to the memory of old stones, old Europe, and sought refuge in the detailed decay of statues they thought were medieval but that were not much older than themselves. It is interesting to note that Arms printed many of his gargoyles on antique papers, hunting down old papers in ledger books over a hundred years old, stating that "old paper is very beautiful to print on . . . because . . . it has assumed a tone which cannot be obtained by staining modern paper."[53] Paradoxically, the paper on which Arms printed his etchings was often older than the statues themselves. Yet images like this were used to propagate a notion of the medieval craftsman in America that was based on the nineteenth-century writing of the man who had designed them—Viollet-le-Duc. In their technical brilliance the gargoyle images of Arms refuse the uncanny, refuse to become anything as disturbing as Méryon's tiny stain of self.

Arms, still playing the craftsman, was hopelessly mired in the nostalgia that still drives so much of the American perception of Paris as a city arrested in time. By

contrast most American writers who flocked to live in the city between the wars were interested in modern painting and stayed on the fashionable Left Bank. The chimeras of Notre-Dame were never entirely forgotten, however. The French-born American writer Anaïs Nin described in her diary in December 1926 how they helped her understand the intellectual topography of the city: "Night and day the gargoyles of Notre-Dame look down upon Paris with a sinister expression, with derision, mockery, amusement, with hate, fear, disgust. For two years I looked down into Paris and tried to understand why the gargoyles had such expressions. It seemed strange that they should be able to look in such a manner at the lovely river, the graceful bridges, the ancient palaces, the gardens, the majestic avenues, the flowers, the quays and the old books, the bird-market, the lovers, the students. What do they see beneath these attractive surfaces? Why do they frown perpetually and mock eternally? What monstrous secrets made their eyes bulge out, twisted their mouths, filled their heads with wrinkles and grimaces? I know now."[54] The writer had learned from the gargoyles to question the extraordinary mythic power of Paris as the city of an almost exclusively male modernity. Feeling intellectually blocked and excluded by the city's hypermasculine spaces (Montparnasse and the Latin Quarter), Nin saw in the stones of its most famous monument at the city's old center a figure for her own displacement. In J. Gerald Kennedy's words, she "metaphorized her alienation from Paris in the gargoyle's sardonic gaze."[55]

A French guide specifically produced for tourists between the wars to take up to the balustrade and towers describes something very similar to Nin's psychological reading of the gargoyle's gaze and the process of fascination by which every visitor was drawn away from looking at the vista of the city by the chimeras: "What artists gave birth to these fantastic beasts, winged demons, stryge with a human head? What thoughts grow in their fecund imaginations? In the midst of these deformed beings a strange malaise seizes us. It is almost in spite of ourselves that our eyes attach themselves to these monsters, in which, soon, we see nothing but beauty."[56] This identification contrasts with the ways in which, over the next decades and especially after the Second World War, the chimeras tend to disappear from the newly brightened and Americanized transformation of the Parisian imaginary. They are too gloomy, too loaded with associations of the dark years of occupation. There are a number of photographs of young GIs on the balustrade in the years following the liberation of Paris with their arms around the waists of French girls, replaying the composition of Édouard de Beaumont's painting of the previous century. In these and many other photographs of the period the emphasis is upon the gaze outward toward the city, to the future. This is the optimistic gaze of nonidentification which typifies the Ameri-

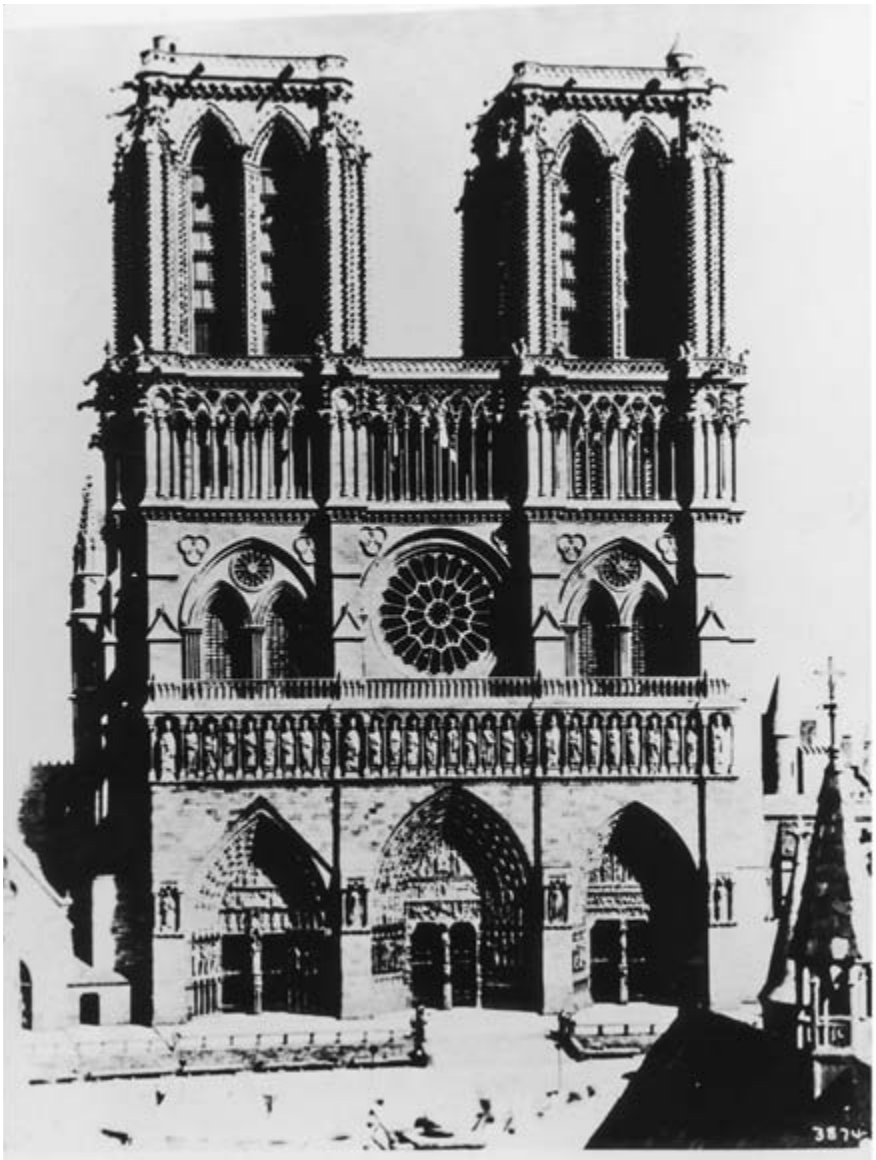
can reception of the gargoyles, as more innocent, less dangerous Parisian stereotypes. This is true of the American journalist Allan Temko's description of the chimeras in his 1952 "biography" of the cathedral, in which the chimeras are lightened up:

> And perched on the balustrades, staring over the city, crouching, grimacing, ready to spring into space and pounce downward, are hundreds of grotesques—the gargoyles of Notre-Dame—inhuman birds with half-human faces who have sprouted like myths from the rock. . . . To please the Virgin, or not to displease her, the Master Builders placed their wildest beasts on the uppermost portions of the church. Their exact medieval appearance cannot be described, for the gargoyles seen today are the work of Viollet-le-Duc; the originals gradually weathered away, and when, during the Englightenment, they commenced to fall from time to time, with a frightening crash on the parvis two hundred feet below, those that remained were destroyed.
>
> A twentieth-century enlightenment, however, led by the intrepid exploration of C. G. Jung, has again begun to appreciate the value and necessity of the monstrous in art. The gargoyles belonged to the furthermost range of the human soul, deeper than the cave of Lascaux, overgrown by thirty, or fifty, or one hundred thousand years of progress from savagery, like the moss-grown oaks of the Druid forest. They underlie all the religions of the earth, as the Virgin Mother does, and the Hero Son who must endure torment, allegorical or real, in order to triumph.[57]

The medium that most successfully articulated the triumph of the gargoyle as a sign of "twentieth-century enlightenment" was cinema. Projecting moving images before crowds of rapt devotees onto large white screens in total darkness, this new medium combined elements of the sacred medieval mass and the phantasmagoric romantic theater to create a magical and truly monstrous experience. Yet it was not movement but stillness that made the chimeras crucial subjects of twentieth-century filmic fabulation. In the years between the wars cinema audiences all over the world saw Paris through the eyes of the chimeras. They appear in numerous newsreels that concern events in the city as metonymic signs of Paris watching over various civic and historical events. In one silent Pathé newsreel called *Gothic: A Paris Cameo* (1929) they get the whole show to themselves. The screen caption reads: "Grotesque figures peer over the city from all sorts of corners," and we then see the shrieking, scaly ape close up and then the shot of three chimeras, as had first been taken by Henri Le Secq. But unlike the single photograph, this shot establishes a different sense of place, a locus in regard to the audience sitting and watching the newsreel. This is somewhere in the world, somewhere they might want to visit. The captions continue: "Statuary everywhere—some striking, some quaint and some queer!"

301. Rotwang and Frer fighting on the balustrade of a cathedral. Still from *Metropolis*, directed by Fritz Lang, 1928.

Even films that have nothing ostensibly to do with Paris refer to these archetypal monsters of modernity. This is true of one of the most sublime of all silent films, Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* of 1928, which tends to be seen as a phantasmagorical allegory of the new machine age. Before drastic cuts were made for release, however, the vast Gothic cathedral had been a much more important element, alongside the futuristic city and the dungeon factories. Its stone jamb statues came to life out of their niches, and at the end of the film the hero and villain fight on the balustrade of the flickeringly lit church, which symbolizes the social unity sought at the end of the narrative between worker and capitalist. This scene recalls Hugo's novel *Notre-Dame de Paris* most notably in a series of enormous seated and crouching chimeras looming in the darkness, clearly based on those of Notre-Dame (fig. 301). The director described wanting to make a film which represented the "battle between modern science and occultism, the science of the medieval ages," and described how in a lost scene "out of a gothic church came all these ghosts and ghouls and beasties."[58] Tom Gunning has recently shown how "the gothic exists at the core of the modern" in this film: "*Metropolis* converts psychoanalytic imagery into visual tropes as creatively as medieval cathedrals did the Holy Scriptures."[59] Lang's rethinking of the gargoyle for the future dystopias of modernist science fiction was to be highly influential in postmodern film.



302. Reconstruction of Notre-Dame de Paris (only lowest tier actual size) at Universal Studios, 1923.

The greatest image producer of the twentieth century, Hollywood, tended to look backward rather than forward. The Cathedral of Notre-Dame and its panoply of gargoyles appeared in no fewer than nine live-action adaptations of Hugo's novel for the silver screen. The first-ever film version, *Esmérelda*, by Victorin Jasset, made in

1906, appears to take place within cardboard sets directly based on Méryon's etchings of the gallery below the balustrade.[60] The first silent version made in Hollywood, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame,* directed by Wallace Worsley in 1923, was one of the most expensive movies made up to that date and involved 2,500 extras for the crowd scenes. But its greatest undertaking was building a giant replica of the cathedral's exterior, or at least the first sixty feet of it, on the Universal City lot. The balustrade was also built full scale on a hilltop about a mile away, and for long shots a miniature model of the whole facade was used. The result of the combination of three pieces of the cathedral was a superbly illusionistic representation of the cathedral (fig. 302). This is Viollet-le-Duc's restored building rather than the one Hugo imagined, just as the novel's illustrators had envisioned it in the 1888 edition. According to a journalist from the *New York Times*, "the immensity of the sets and their accuracy was far beyond the ken of most persons. . . . Every detail has received attention in making the copy in far-off California."[61] This simulacrum was the object of a pilgrimage by members of the French Academy of Artists and Authors "and other students of the Victor Hugo and Louis XI periods," according to *Variety*, and stood until the 1960s, when it was destroyed by fire. Worsley's adaptation begins with a view of the whole west facade, with the camera panning in upon the gargoyles and chimeras, created by local sculptor Finn Frowlich. Coming closer, we realize that one of them is the actor Lon Chaney, who played Quasimodo, leaning on the balustrade, his hands on his chin, in the exact spot where the pensive demon should be (fig. 303). In this sense the Stryge is also a character in the film "played" by Chaney/Quasimodo. The famously mobile silent actor even sticks out his tongue.

303. Quasimodo/Lon Chaney as *Le Stryge*. Still from the beginning of *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* (Universal, 1923).

For American audiences looking up at the silver screen, was there any difference between the newsreel images of the stone ghouls and those plaster companions of Lon Chaney? Perhaps this was the moment both the Parisian statues had always been waiting for: to play the role of actual chimeras—illusions and phantasms trapped on celluloid to be projected larger than life to the accompaniment of organ and piano music in picture palaces all over the world. In 1939 a sound version of the novel directed by Wilhelm Dieterle with Charles Laughton in the hunchback role was made at RKO. This is also a powerful re-creation, not of medieval Paris but of the romantic and sublimely lit perspectives of the novel's nineteenth-century illustrators. This version focuses even more on the cathedral, opening with the king's pronouncement that the book will kill the cathedral as he compares the printing press to the statues and gargoyles filmed in stark, contrasting details on yet another wooden cathedral built on the RKO ranch at Encino, California. This version has a bittersweet ending, like all the Hollywood versions, but here focusing upon the west facade. As Esmeralda (Maureen O'Hara) rides off with the hero she glances back up to where poor ugly

304. "Why was I not made of stone like thee?" Stills from the closing sequence of *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* with Charles Laughton (RKO, 1939).

305. *Le Stryge* among the stars. Still from *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*, directed by Lewis Milestone, starring Gina Lollobrigida, Anthony Quinn, and *Le Stryge*, 1952.

Quasimodo sits alone on the gallery, leaning his cheek against his chimera alter ego (a chimera unlike any on the Parisian church and which looks more like a statue of Laughton himself) and lamenting, "Why was I not made of stone like thee?" The camera pans back to reveal the dramatic lights and darks of the cathedral, more flattened, graphic, and nineteenth-century-looking than ever, complete with the Stryge in silhouette (fig. 304).

In 1956 another version was made in France, directed by Jean Delannoy, in which the Stryge for the first time plays a supporting role alongside Gina Lollobrigida's Esmeralda and Anthony Quinn's Quasimodo. The art director repositioned the chimeras of the balustrade, grouping together the most startling and demonic ones but making the Stryge the most prominent of all (fig. 305). Although attempting to be more archaeologically accurate in re-creating the architectural details of the church, this color version is less evocative than the two earlier ones, precisely because it owes less to Hugo's own visual culture.

A superb re-creation of romantic graphic effects can be seen in the Walt Disney Company's thirty-fourth animated feature film, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, released in 1996. The sweeping vistas and lurid lighting effects of the beautifully modeled backgrounds in the film are based on earlier illustrations to Hugo's novel, careful study of the topography of Paris, and even at times the dark drawings made by Victor Hugo himself. Some of the preproduction sketches would have been admired by Viollet-le-Duc for their detailed naturalism, tinged with an edge of danger that suggests the nacreous beauty of contemporary Gothic style, but this darker

aspect is mostly lost in the final cut. The characters—flesh rather than stone—are, by contrast, visual ciphers. They have the usual Disney "appeal"—the voluptuously fleshy flatness and exaggeratedly large eyes that give Mickey Mouse his status as the Byzantine icon of modern childhood. Three of them are chimeras from the balustrade, gargoyles who come to life to be Quasimodo's friends. This comedy trio moves on legless bodies—a witty reference to their actual lack of lower bodies, as they are fixed to the horizontal parapet. One is a fat, lovable lady gargoyle named Laverne, another a tall, imperious male with an English accent, Victor, and the third a funny little trickster named, not coincidentally, Hugo. In a production still, the three stone cuties wave "Hi!" to us from the de-demonized heights of Disney sublime (fig. 306). The aims of the filmmakers are clear:

> The essential darkness of Hugo's tale presented a challenge to the filmmakers, who sought to balance the highly dramatic tone of the story with moments of emotional light. . . . As an expression of Quasimodo's humor, directors Trousdale and Wise suggested making the gargoyles of Notre Dame into friends and confidantes for him. The directors' notion of talking gargoyles is, in some ways, suggested by Hugo in the novel: "The other statues, the ones of monsters and demons, felt no hatred for Quasimodo. . . . The saints were his friends and blessed him; the monsters were his friends, and protected him. Thus he would pour out his heart at length to them." Imparting an element of fantasy very much in the Disney tradition, the gargoyles, says supervising animator Dave Pruiksma, are "the fantasy glue that holds together the film and helps tell the story with humor and lightness." Yet, the moviemakers made a conscious choice not to have real magic; instead they envisioned the gargoyles as creatures of Quasimodo's imagination.[62]

306. Victor, Laverne, and Hugo, gargoyle characters. Still from Walt Disney's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, 1996.

The three gargoyles are presented as projections of three aspects of Quasimodo' s psyche: "they express aspects of Quasimodo's inner conscience: one, the wild side that wants to go out there and do crazy things, another the straight-shooting, wisdom side, the third, the stiff stuffed shirt side."[63] In the traditional way that Disney has always simultaneously elevated and ridiculed the animal through anthropomorphism, the stone creatures become, like Quasimodo himself, lovable, huggable dolls, objects of identification and empathy yearned for by the four-year-old in all of us.

The stone gargoyles of the cathedral play a more ominous role at the film's climax. They are the conduit for molten lead poured onto the crowd, as in Hugo's tale, but become most significant in the evil Frollo's death scene. In the novel the stone gargoyle had broken as he clung to it and he had fallen to his death. In the film, as he tries to kill Esmeralda he grabs a gargoyle, crying, "May evil go to hell!" and it

comes to life. A spectral demonic light appears in the gargoyle's eyes, and the stone breaks, to the horror of the villain, who plunges to his death. What made the gargoyle uncanny was, ironically, the very fact that it never surrendered itself to animated life, that it was always waiting to come to life. It certainly did not burst into song. For the Disney "imagineers," as they are called, such anticipation, the very source of fear and excitement in the romantic sublime, must always be gratified. Animation is all about this need to make everything come to life, to deny death. The end of Hugo's novel is almost unbearably morbid. The hunchback disappears, after watching from the tower as his beloved Esmeralda hangs from the gibbet. Their entwined skeletons are finally found locked in a rotting embrace. The end of Disney's film is as unbearably life affirming. The cute "Quasi" emerges from the shadows of the cathedral and is accepted by a little child in the crowd as having a beautiful soul beneath his deformed exterior. The always-prescient Walter Benjamin noted the difference between the work of nineteenth-century book illustrators, who were among Walt Disney's early influences, and that of the latter's earliest features, remarking that Disney "contains not the slightest seed of mortification. In this he distances himself from the humor of Grandville, which always carried within it the presence of death."[64]

Disney's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* was very popular, especially in France, an index of how much French popular culture has assimilated "American Gothic" values as its own. It was in the United States, however, that it came under attack from the intellectual establishment for distorting a great work of art. In a withering attack on Disney's attempt to "cash in" on classical literature through distortion and trivialization, Paul Goldberger criticized the shortcomings of Disney's vision of the Gothic cathedral, which had, of course, been the central character in the Hugo's novel. "Notre Dame itself has become a cartoon character: big, bright, a Cinderella castle in the sky. True, the Gothic details are portrayed fairly accurately, if you put aside the dancing gargoyles. But animation, however well executed, is simply the wrong medium in which to show Gothic architecture."[65] Paradoxically, it is this animation of the inanimate, that shiver of stone become flesh, that is at the heart of the theory of the uncanny and that is, as we have seen, the predominant theme that links the gargoyles of Notre-Dame in the twentieth to those in the nineteenth century. Disney products often do this: pinpoint or develop a crucial anxiety or cultural trope and then make us all feel better (for a moment) by phantasmally neutralizing it. The chimeras of the cartoon version are anti-uncanny because they not only are given characters based on contemporary sitcom stereotypes, but also are projections of a simplistic notion of human instrumentality and desire. The same problematic relationship between high technical accomplishment and overdetermined surface that we saw in Arms's etchings of the gargoyles earlier in the century is played out at its end

in a multiauthored, multi-million-dollar product of the great dream factory.

The cultural influence of this and the earlier film versions should not, however, be underestimated. In 1998 the 630,000 visitors who climbed the steps to look from the towers of Notre-Dame and pose among the gargoyles were not only visiting a hallowed site on the modern European tour, but were also positioning themselves within their internalized memories of these filmic narratives. Most people visiting the cathedral today know it best through the various film versions of Hugo's novel. Just as we saw the nineteenth-century cathedral being restored in response to the popularity of this work of fiction in the 1840s, this same story had real ramifications in the way people structured their perceptions of the cathedral in the later twentieth century. A *New Yorker* cartoon of 15 July 1972 by Edward Frascino has a fat, cigar-smoking tourist posing with one of the chimeras and his wife asking, "Come on Harve. Do your Quasimodo for us!" (fig. 307). Three years later the *New York Times* ran a cartoon with a camera-toting tourist with turned into stone to become a gargoyle himself.[66] New York, of course, has some of the most beautiful gargoyles, both pseudo-Gothic and art deco, gracing its skyscrapers, which may have had some influence on its becoming the Paris of postmodernity, the haunted and ruined site of Gotham-Gothic horror in films like *Batman*. Recent years have seen the commodification of Notre-Dame in advertizing. One full-page magazine ad featured an exact reproduction of Nègre's 1853 photograph of the balustrade and vampire, only with a bottle of mouthwash in the place of Henri Le Secq, next to *the* gargoyle that is not really of the gurgling, gargling kind at all. But he has come to stand for gargoyle more than any other image, modern or medieval.

America, lacking a "real" Middle Ages, re-created its own bigger, better, and whiter cathedrals in the vast simulacral sets of Hollywood or their analogues, like the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York. The rich indigenous tradition of American Gothic which runs from Edgar Alan Poe to Hollywood horror films is built on an alternative myth—not on the cathedral as a symbol of community but upon the city or the house as the self-destructive haunted site. This unashamedly individualist vision of the Gothic reinvented the gargoyle for postmodernity in the genres of horror and science fiction. The Gothic urban aesthetic in films such as Ridley Scott's *Alien* (1979) and Tim Burton's *Batman* (1989) has been highly influential and effective. In these works the gargoyle is not something appended to an exterior building but something that fastens itself within the guts, gnawing its way out from within after invading the body as a microscopic virus or spore. The monster in *Alien* has been described as "a Linnaean nightmare, defying every natural law of evolution; by turns bivalve, crustacean, reptilian, and humanoid."[67] The uncertainty about whether "a lifeless object might not in fact be animate" was cited by Freud as one of

307. Edward Frascino, "Come on Harve. Do your Quasimodo for us!" From *New Yorker*, 15 July 1972.

308. The Alley, with winged chimeras, Chicago, 2000 (Photo: author.)

309. Chimeras creeping over the author's flesh. Tattoos from *Gargoyles of Notre-Dame* (Dover Publications). (Photo: Joel Snyder.)

the crucial effects of the uncanny, and around the same time, the art critic Wilhelm Worringer defined the expressive form of the Gothic as an "uncanny pathos which attaches to the animation of the inorganic."[68] But whereas the anxiety used to be that of the blurring of distinctions between human and animal, for modernity and postmodernity (although it is already present in the talking dolls of E. T. A. Hoffmann) it is the blurring of those distinctions differentiating the human being from the machine, the robot, the cyborg.

Another area where gargoyles have seen a comeback is the postpunk youth movement in music known as "Goth rock." Here the groups, with names like Christian Death, Specimen, and Skeletal Family, not only wear black and other vampiric trappings; their croaking and clashing songs and lyrics celebrate terror in the imagining of monstrous things. "Emanating from the ruins of the urban-industrial space of the West," this music is also about pouring industrial loud noise into the silent spaces, screaming with the gargoyle's mouth.[69] The group R.E.M. placed a distorted version of the Stryge on the cover of its album *Chronic Town*. Horror films and Goth-punk music videos play on metaphors of the fragile human body, which becomes the abode of gargoylelike parasites, disgorging what is inside to the outside, ultimately being about the fragmentation of human identity. At a store on Chicago's north side called the Alley, specializing in the paraphernalia of dark wave, postpunk, and Goth and where there are hundreds of different gargoyles for sale made of plaster and resin, two horrific life-sized winged chimeras crouch on the roof, as though the progeny

of Notre-Dame had taken wing, flown across the Atlantic to land on our rooftops, and populated the New World with the demons of the Old (fig. 308). They invade the body not only in the form of loud music but on the screen of the epidermis itself in *The Gargoyles of Notre Dame Tattoos*, recently published by Dover. These color transfers literally make one's flesh crawl with replicas of the creatures from the cathedral, including the Stryge and the unicorn demon (fig. 309). Charged with all the class and gender sterotypes associated with this type of body art, fashionably marginal in today's youth culture, the statues designed by Viollet-le-Duc have entered a quite unforeseen phase of their corporeal existence. I have worn them myself.

Another mass migration of the these winged creatures into the imaginations of more mainstream American youth was in the television series *Gargoyles*, released in 1994 by Buena Vista Entertainment. The show followed the exploits of a group of six Scottish gargoyles, including their leader, Goliath (whose massive stone/flesh body is Batman, the Incredible Hulk, Méryon's *Le Stryge*, and Rodin's *The Thinker* all rolled into one), who are put into stone sleep for a thousand years to be awakened by billionaire David Xanatos when he buys the castle they are part of and transports it to surmount his skyscraper in New York. If the gargoyle was feminized in the nineteenth-century imaginary, today he has the steroid-bloated biceps, male sex-organ-colonized muscles, and female-sized breasts of the bodybuilder—the idealized monster of postmodernity.[70] This cartoon tradition has its genealogy in earlier comic strips, such as a series called *Human Gargoyles*, created in the seventies, and the appearance of a superhero called *The Gargoyle* in a four-issue limited series issued by Marvel Comics in 1985.[71] This told the story of a man's childhood sexual traumas, which cursed him to gargoyleness above the rooftops of Manhattan. In one sequence in the third issue, all the stone gargoyles of the city come to life and run rampant through the streets, once again suggesting a particularly American Gothic fear of the chaos of community. But even with his bodybuilder's body *The Gargoyle* and his animated television progeny in their brooding melancholy recall the archetypal images of Notre-Dame (fig. 310).

Although it lasted only two seasons the television show *Gargoyles* had so many fans that it has continued to expand on the Internet, where in the words of one fan, people can create "alternatives to episode storylines and create different futures for the characters," as well as their own artwork and Web sites.[72] At these sites one can find a lively new history of gargoyles as constructed in *The Gargoyles Bible*, written by Greg Weisman, who cocreated and produced the television series. Here we read how gargoyles are not sculpted statues magically brought to life but a kind of animal like the dinosaurs. They have families and procreate (another American myth unimaginable in European gargoyleness). They move around only at night. In what

310. Cover from *The Gargoyle*, created by J. M. de Matteis and Don Perlin, artist Mark Badger (Marvel Comics, 1995).

is honestly described as a "fairly Darwinistic series" the gargoyle's turning to stone during the day "made evolutionary sense," since it protected them during their daytime slumber from wild animals. "They have the potential to be as smart as humans but their animal instincts are stronger." They lay eggs that look like cannonballs. A whole drama describes the way gargoyles once made a pact with humans to protect them, but it broke down as humans resented their dependence on the gargoyles' protection. A mass gargoyle-ocide at the time of the Vikings was the result. "By the end of the Eleventh Century, the gargoyle race was, for all practical purposes, extinct. But the legend lived on. Within a couple of centuries humans began carving gargoyles again. Some carved them in honor of the once mighty race. Some with only a vague notion that a gargoyle signified protection from evil. Some as merely decorative sculpture. These are the gargoyles that we know from the cathedrals and castles of the world." At the end of a century which saw attempts at mass genocide, this postmodern myth plays on a tradition we have traced of racializing the monster. But whereas the nineteenth century saw the gargoyle as a foreign other, today the gargoyle has come to stand for a desired but still othered multiculturalism. In the mythic narrative of the television series, the gargoyles were almost wiped out. Only

six "survivors" continue to live on in the new world. As stone security guards, these descendants of immigrants from the shores of the Seine have become just the latest minority or ethnic group to stake its claim in the spaces of the American imaginary. "Once again Goliath and the gargoyles will protect their territory and community from enemies. . . . But now the territory isn't simply the castle, but all of Manhattan Island, and his community is every innocent (human and gargoyle) that lives there. And now he knows that the worst enemies often come from within the community."[73]

IV · *Global Gargoyles on the Internet*

> How can we recover the games of the past? How can we relearn, not just to decipher or to appropriate the images imposed on us, but to create new images of every kind? Not just other films or better photographs, not simply to rediscover the figurative in painting, but to put images into circulation, to convey them, disguise them, deform them, heat them red hot, freeze them, multiply them. To banish the boredom of Writing, to suspend the privileges of the signifier, give notice to the formalism of the non-image, to unfreeze content, and to play, scientifically and pleasurably, in, with and against the powers of the image.
>
> MICHEL FOUCAULT, *"Photogenic Painting"*[74]

"The Internet has become a haven for gargoyle fans," according to one of them, Brian Dumlao, on the now-defunct Web page *Gargoyles: The Series, the Fans, and Fan Impact*. There are hundreds of gargoyle sites available, some of them expanding stories spun around the recent television series, but others are historical, providing digital pictures and historical information on gargoyles all over the world. Many of these Web sites feature the chimeras of Notre-Dame and especially "*the* gargoyle of Notre-Dame," as he is often called. For more than a century, the chimeras have been flattened into two-dimensional scenes, and in this respect the gargoyle on my computer screen can be the same size and might even have been scanned from the small, flat postcard with which we began this chapter (fig. 311). Yet the electronic reality of this image makes it quite different from the postcard in terms of my power to manipulate it and the numbers of people I can send it to. Amplified and multiplied, it can be launched into a waiting world of infinite sizes, transitions, and reappropriations. It becomes so absolutely transitive that it no longer can be called an image as such, as a fixed thing or point, but becomes a kind of vibration of possibilities—a shimmering, volatile template that is used rather than merely viewed, interacting with the needs and desires of countless beholders. It can become my screen saver, a

place of constant return, or it can be placeless—changed, edited, cropped, and sent anywhere in the world. In many ways this veracity, this truth in its endless replication, like the trace of a relic of the true cross, broken into ever smaller pieces as it instigates ever larger receptacles and reliquaries, makes it more medieval than anything produced in the past four hundred years. Whereas the photographic image is bound indexically to the real, and thus any photograph of the pensive demon refers to that particular statue in Paris, the digital image is a nonplace, constructed out of numerical digital codes which are realized on screen through points of light. Thus, the two-dimensional image of the gargoyle on my computer (fig. 311) is totally different from any of his earlier manifestations. As Lucia Santaella Braga points out, "the numerical image is under perpetual metamorphosis, oscillating between the image that is actualized on the screen and the virtual image or infinite set of potential images that can be calculated by the computer."[75]

It is this loss of the real in digital representation that perhaps explains why I have so many three-dimensional, archaic, and plastic *actual* gargoyles placed all around my computer in order to protect its fragile electronic workings. The past decade has seen not only the proliferation of computer-generated images of gargoyles, but also replicas of Notre-Dame's gargoyles and chimeras specifically for use as desktop demons. Born again to strange, miniaturized three-dimensional life, they have regained their original plasticity in a craze that has swept the world, for creepy little creatures, things that will serve as textual guardians. The apotropaic function that Viollet-le-Duc did not think worth emphasizing in discussing his restoration of the chimeras—the belief that these images could actually keep demons at bay and which some believe was crucial to their original function during the Middle Ages—has returned in our superstitious and irrational postmodernity. The main metaphor through which these creatures continue to be meaningful to us today is their role as "Protectors from Evil in an Imperfect Man-Made World" (the subtitle of one gargoyle Web site). No longer terrified by the dark castles of the Gothic past, the contemporary Gothic has constructed a haunted home where serial killers that that are sons, daughters, fathers, and mothers surf the Web. The gargoyle's otherness protects the domestic hearth, the security of the self, from these all-too-familial monsters. The Internet itself has become a site of fear, providing millions of images of sex as well as gargoyles at the click of a mouse. Perhaps for this reason the computer, as the new cathedral, the new summa, has to be protected from gremlins and bugs by our trusty, old friends. I have a "Gargoyle of Notre-Dame de Paris" mouse pad that provides an apotropaic locus for my searching, just as I have a Stryge sitting on top of my screen who has his own miniature laptop. It is perhaps not so surprising that images of gargoyles have become popular as screen savers, standing as they always have done in that liminal

311. Gargoyle protectors in the author's University of Chicago office. (Photo: Joel Snyder.)

zone between the real and the unreal, still performing their ancient function, snarling at all nasty things that might seek to infect our data.

The place to buy gargoyle replicas, of course, is Paris, on the northeast side of Notre-Dame in shops called La Chimère or La Gargouille, although here in the presence of the stone originals looking at you from above, one tends to notice their dissimilarity. The desk-size Stryge, for example, seems far too elongated (fig. 312). However, he fulfills all the requirements of the souvenir described by Susan Stewart: "The souvenir generates a narrative which reaches only 'behind,' spiraling in a continually inward movement rather than outward toward the future." For this reason the gargoyle bought at Notre-Dame or Chartres Cathedral, like the plastic replica of the Eiffel Tower, is "an allusion and not a model; it comes after the fact and remains both partial to and more expansive than the fact. It will not function without the supplementary narrative discourse that both attaches it to its origins and creates a myth with regard to those origins."[76] The souvenir is the opposite of the uncanny, not offering an incongruous resurfacing of an object from the past into the present, but enveloping the present with the past. Stewart calls this the "failed magic" of the souvenir, in which "instrumentality replaces essence" and in which "the place of origin must remain unavailable in order for desire to be generated."[77] At home in Chicago or in Tokyo, the melancholy demon is sad only because he is estranged from his context.

312. Plastic versions of "le Stryge" and "le Rongeur" for sale at La Gargouille, next to Notre-Dame, Paris. (Photo: Stuart Michaels.)

One can also obtain him by shopping on the Internet, where a number of companies make versions of the pensive demon. From gothicworld.com you can buy a five-and-a-half-inch-high fiber-reinforced plaster version with "stonewash patina" of what is described on the Web page as "the Spitting gargoyle of Notre Dame." Not only has his form been squeezed and squashed into a flatter form of abjection; the meaning of his projecting tongue has been totally changed. According to this description, "in Paris, he appears to be pondering the virtues of the city below him." For a century and a half the gargoyle had whetted his appetite looking down upon the delicious vices, but this would be totally inappropriate for him to do in your office or living room, especially when he looks directly at you! So instead of Lust the gargoyle's gaze is remarketed as a more socially acceptable deadly sin in today's postcapitalist economy—Envy.

Sedated and defanged for domestic use, miniature gargoyles come in all shapes and sizes as the modern totems of our age. W. J. T. Mitchell has argued that in contemporary popular culture the dinosaur is "a modern totem . . . both driven and influenced by its scientific status."[78] In catalogues they are available in stone, cement, hand-cast resin, and even "sanitized, deodorized, 100% cow-manure . . . fashioned into statues by Amish craftsmen."[79] But most often they have to appear to be made out of stone; they have to refer, even as toys, to their original carved status. The verb "to toy" means "to dally with and caress, to compose a fantastic tale, to play a trick or satisfy a whim, to manipulate, and to take fright at," according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Toys have a place "in the world of the dead," according to Susan Stewart. "As part of the general inversions which that world presents, the inanimate comes to life. But more than this, just as the world of objects is always a kind of 'dead among us,' the toy ensures the continuation, in miniature, of the world of life 'on the other side.'"[80] Susan Stewart has described the loss of "sexuality and hence the danger of power" in the process of miniaturization, in which the doll's smallness allows one to feel superiority and manipulate the doll with the terrible tyranny of the child.[81] Perhaps this is why, of all my Strygiana, I prefer the smaller, softer, rubber squeaky-toy version, made in Spain, to my larger, plastic Paris-bought replica, my two-dimensional refrigerator magnet version, and even my half-inch silver plastic Korean key-ring one. Squeaky-Stryge, as I call him, has special features that are lacking, even in Viollet-le-Duc's design. The use of molded rubber makes all his features, down to his lolling tongue, squashy and soft—the very opposite of stone (fig. 313). He is simultaneously both adorable and I think rather uncanny because of the medium in which he has been re-created.

313. Four-inch Squeaky-Stryge close-up. (Photo: Eileen Michal.)

What distinguishes this more recent history of the chimeras as models of the strange in American culture is what Jacques Derrida describes as a process of nor-

malization. "For once one perceives a monster in a monster, one begins to domesticate it, one begins . . . to compare it to the norms, to analyze it, consequently to master whatever could be terrifying in this figure of the monster." Although the contemporary philosopher argues that all experience open to the future must welcome the monster, according hospitality to what is absolutely foreign or strange, this simultaneously domesticates it, "to make it part of the household and have it assume the habits, to make us assume new habits. This is the movement of culture."[82] Disney made the gargoyles speak English in order to domesticate them. You can purchase a "motion-sensing gargoyle" which "alerts you to guests—or intruders—with a bone-chilling howl." Advertized as "a new friend from the dark ages, upgraded with 90's technology," this "cool granite-style demon perches by your door, on your porch, walkway or steps." Of the squat type with its hands around its knees, the creature has the horns of the demon of Notre-Dame but not the melancholy menace. If people approach, the eight-inch-high monster shrieks, and his eyes come alive with a lurid red glow. According to the catalogue, "friends are thrilled. Thieves and others . . . run off." This is in fact a contemporary American gated-community version of the gargoyles that guard the city of Amiens in the thirteenth-century poem the *Roman d'Abladane*, only those poured disgusting things or wonderful liquids onto the heads of those entering, according to their good or evil intentions.[83] But even here the gargoyle never spoke. This seems to be a particularly recent fantasy, as if the monster cannot actually protect us unless we wire it for sound. The gargoyle's gaze no longer reflects the world back at us so that we can see in it our own deepest and darkest desires. It says, "Keep out"; it says, "This is mine!"

The feminization of the stone monster—a trope that goes back to the mid-nineteenth century, as we have seen, reaches its apogee in the recently advertized Girlgoyles produced by the Franklin Mint. "Girlgoyles . . . lady-like medieval girls who are the mythical guardians of the feminine mystique . . . who protect against split ends, chipped nails and spider-eyes. . . . Blowdrya chills out as she dries her golden locks, Maskara enchances her bedroom eyes and Manaqura even has cotton between her toes so she doesn't smear." Washington, DC, artist Jacob Folger, the "Modern Gargoyle Master" notes that most of his customers are women, who are perhaps able to notice "the inherent cuteness of the monsters." This relentless commodification of the gargoyle as good, soft, and lovable prevents it from expressing any of the melancholy musing over decay and human transience that had been its role in the nineteenth century. Julia Kristeva has pointed to this lack of sadness in postmodern culture, which tends to view romantic melancholy as a comedy rather than "the abyssal discontent" that so inspired Baudelaire and Méryon.[84]

If the gargoyles of Notre-Dame have penetrated our psyches, it is because they

314. Advertisement for Dedo, the friendly French gargoyle.

did not remain seven-foot-high carved stones hundreds of feet above Paris. But no matter how far removed my tiny rubber Stryge is from his great-great-grandfather in Paris, that point of origin, that reference back to the city is fundamental. In a catalogue of reproductions of gargoyles, many of these totally transplanted gargoyles claim a Parisian myth of origin (fig. 314): "Meet the friendly French gargoyle. According to folklore, cute little Dedo the Gargoyle caught the imagination of Parisians when he caught a small boy who was falling from the roof of the Notre-Dame cathedral. Legend maintains that Dedo was created by a nun who thought gargoyles should not be scary and evil-looking. This impish elfin creature with crossed toes will delight you as he watches over your home from your mantle, end table or hearth."

This reference to their Europan locus is crucial to the success of gargoyle reproductions. One producer of them even has a Web site where potential buyers can tour French cathedrals and castles. Another advertizes a gargoyle proper rather than one of the chimeras, a small, snouted, crouching dragon eight and one-half inches tall "in grey cathedral stone," which astonishingly claims to be *not* one of those restored by Viollet-le-Duc. "Our replica . . . is a copy of one of the few remaining originals on the cathedral." Paradoxically, the more that gargoyles float across the Net as disembodied images, or are sold in miniaturized form by the millions in catalogues, the more their locus of origin has to be emphasized. Cynthia Reece McCaffety in an article entitled "France's Gargoyles" that appeared aptly in the airline magazine *Hemispheres* discusses the globalization of the gargoyle industry, making travel unnecessary, and the 9.5 million dollars made by just one American firm specializing in gargoyle reproductions. "If you can't get to Paris at the moment to embrace the

superstars in person—you can still surround yourself with Gothic grotesques. It's getting easier every day. Cruise your neighbourhood garden supply, or just pick up a catalogue and a phone. Shop the internet if you're into it, and soon your mailbox will be fillled with grotesque yard art, snarling drawer pulls, videos, T-shirts, calendars, brooches, lamp finials—and, if you're not careful, a 7-inch, hand-molded, cow-manure, plant-feeding Grow-Goyle. Skip the poo-pet and curl up in the recliner with your gargoyle plush toy, click on an episode of a Gargoyles cartoon, and enjoy a steaming hot bowl of gargoyle-shaped pasta. You'll be entertained and educated, and, unlike the original audience, you won't have to peer 200 feet up in the air."[85]

Contemporary gargoyledom certainly has its serious pleasures, and I disagree with recent cultural critics like Paul Virilio and Jean Baudrillard who equate virtual technologies and reproductions with the loss of reality or, like Umberto Eco, describe a process whereby "we are giving you the reproduction so that you will no longer feel any need for the original." Such views are typical of a deeply rooted Catholic attitude to images as a retreat from the divine, based on a long tradition of what Martin Jay has called "the denigration of vision" in French culture.[86] As I hope this book has shown, there are crucial signs of modernity, like the gargoyles of Notre-Dame, whose afterlife has been through reproductions but whose cultural resonance is wholly derived from their referring back to a particular place. Not only because so many of the modern reproductions replay the forms of the chimeras created by Viollet-le-Duc, but also because historically the Notre-Dame restoration marked the beginning of a remade, commodified, and modernized Middle Ages. Today's domesticated gargoyles repeatedly point back to Paris, where the most recent restoration of the cathedral has just been completed. For the year 2000 there was unveiled a cathedral which, compared to its dark and sooty earlier twentieth-century incarnation, would have pleased Le Corbusier—it is white!

315. The pensive demon, winter 2000. (Photo: author.)

Epilogue to Part II

THE GARGOYLES RESTORED AGAIN (2000)

In authentic history writing, the destructive impulse is just as strong as the saving impulse. From what can something be redeemed? Not so much from the disrepute or discredit in which it is held as from a determined mode of its transmission. The way in which it is valued as "heritage" is more insidious than its disappearance could ever be.

WALTER BENJAMIN[1]

In this book I have tried to understand not just the creation of the chimeras and gargoyles of Notre-Dame but their "transmission" through time, without falling into that mode of nostalgia that Walter Benjamin warns us against—the idea that we can redeem the imagined and always idealized plenitude which we construct as the past, by restoring it either materially or textually. Benjamin's notion that history is fulfilled not by its repetition or consolidation as "heritage" but by its destruction might seem shocking at first. But the only way to come to terms with the actual stone chimeras today is to see them as what Benjamin called "dialectical images" liberated from their many pasts and pointing to possible futures: "Only dialectical images are genuinely historical—that is, not archaic—images. The image that is read—which is to say, the image in the now of its recognizability—bears to the highest degree the imprint of the perilous critical moment on which all reading is founded."[2] What we find looking at the "now of their recognizability" is that they are unrecognizable, fragmentary, and in some cases no longer there. The pensive demon has gone. One has only to compare photographs taken one hundred years ago (see fig. 232) with one from the year 2000 to see this (fig. 315). Compared to the razor-sharp cheekbones that Méryon etched, his features are dulled, the great nose is flattened, and the gouged orbits are no longer deep enough to hold those far-seeing eyes. He is full of holes and almost hollow and had to be patched up by restorers, who used old photographs to fill out his fractured form. The great, crouched dog whose grasping sensuality so influenced the symbolist painters and the great unicorn demon which nearly outdid the Stryge in popularity are hardly recognizable today (see appendix, no. 23). Many of the chimeras on the as-yet-unrestored eastern side of the balustrade are in even worse shape, like the

goat that Pyanet carved in 1853 (no. 33) and the bull, which is now just a stump (no. 49). Their strange, scaly, hairy or feathery surfaces, which were so crucial to their meaning as the contagious flesh of modernity, are gone. This disappearance is even reflected in the sphere of reproduction. A recent color postcard with the title "Paris Notre-Dame" is part of a series which evokes major monuments of the city for the postmodern tourist through the metonymy of tiny details, aptly called "Fragments Parisiens." It shows against a bright blue sky the sunlit head of the dragon with bent arms, or, rather, its skeletal remains.

The chimeras are threatened by the same slow death that is happening to vast stretches of the world's forests because of industrial pollution. Their rapid erosion has been caused by sulfuric acid, which seeps into the limestone from rain and the humid atmosphere of the city until the stone crystallizes into soft, sugarlike powder. The main culprit is car pollution, which has, of course, accelerated much more in recent decades. This process is impossible to reverse or halt except by taking the sculptures inside.[3] Gargoyles have had their various foes over the years—the rain whose dank intimates they have always been, the architects who have pulled them down as examples of barbarous taste, and even the restorers who have remade them—but the most pernicious enemy of all has gone unseen. In the case of the Stryge this enemy has eaten away from inside, mirroring the demon's own vampiric propensities on a microscopic level, sucking the lifeblood that holds him together until he has become only a shadow of his former self. Modernity, which I have argued, gave rise to this particular monster, the city that gave him life, has been the very agent of his destruction.

This dire situation explains why, compared with previous restorations, that recently completed raised very little controversy. By far the most vociferous critic of earlier campaigns of restoration of the cathedral was Achille Carlier, who was editor of *Les Pierres de France: Organe de la Société pour le respect et la protection des anciens monuments français*, first published in 1937. Carlier had already attacked Viollet-le-Duc's restoration of Notre-Dame in an earlier article, but when the Service des monuments historiques began a major cleaning of the facade in 1939, he went apoplectic. Much of the debate focused not on the chimeras but on the crockets, the little, projecting bulblike forms that animate the vertical elements of the towers. Carlier eventually published close-up photographs of the balustrade between the towers before (in 1939) and after (in 1952) in order to show that the crockets had all been recarved. While Carlier's enemy Ernest Herpe insisted that those recently replaced were already the work of Viollet-le-Duc, Carlier disagreed and lamented that Notre-Dame was already "lost—its old expressive stones obliterated by the restorers."[4] These debates might seem trivial today, but they remind us of the place of Notre-

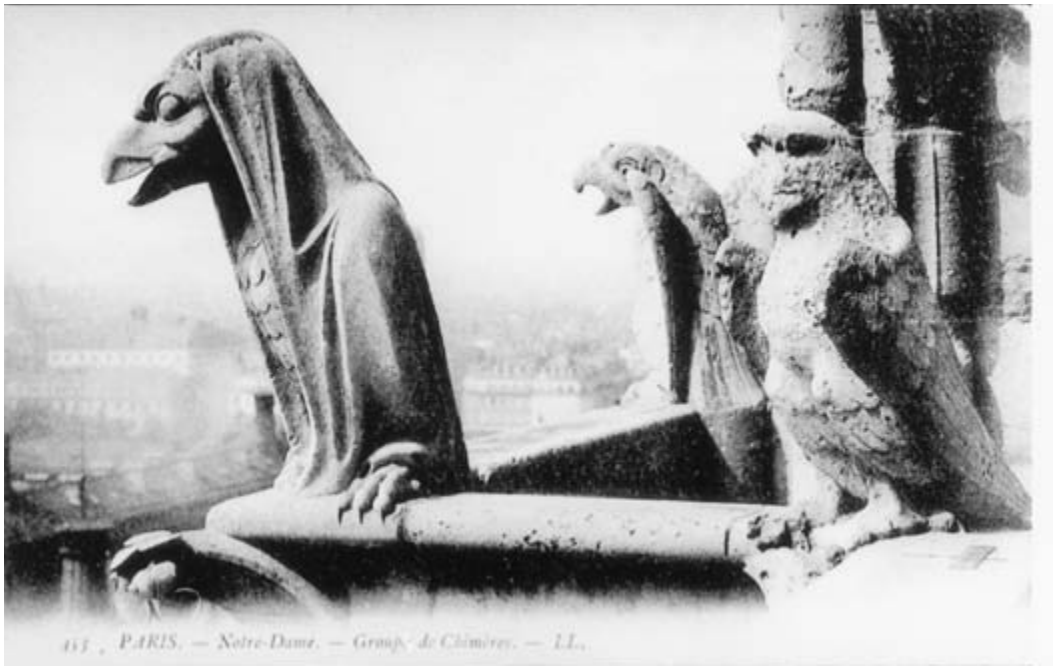
Dame as a French national symbol and the fact there are practical problems to face as great monuments deteriorate. For one, they become dangerous. In a 1955 article on the restoration in the official organ of the restorers, *Monuments historiques de la France*, Monsieur Herpe listed the necessity of restoration as an urgent matter, since "falling stones might cause mortal accidents for passersby."[5] On 27 April 1936 the head of a gargoyle from the facade crashed down to the parvis, and at eleven o'clock in the morning on 11 November 1940 an entire gargoyle from the southern side of the nave did the same. Both Carlier and his opponents from the Monuments historiques appeared on radio shows in the next decade arguing their case, and articles appeared in popular periodicals like *Le Figaro litteraire* both for and against the restoration of the cathedral. "Save the body without killing the soul," wrote Jean Schlumberger on the part of the antirestorers, and Bernard Champigneulle wrote on behalf of the restorers that the crockets and fleurons that were being restored were, like most of the gargoyles, "remade, or even invented a hundred years ago."[6] In this battle between the modernists and the medievalists, both sides saw themselves as fighting over the very soul of the (still feminized) cathedral."[7] But in fact they were only squabbling over her carcass. By 1972 attitudes had already changed. Following another cleaning (1968–71) celebrated in an article entitled "Notre-Dame Lavée," François Loyer wrote how under the imperative of the powerful Minister of Culture André Malraux, the new, cleaned Notre-Dame provided an opportunity to appreciate Viollet-le-Duc's restoration of the building![8] Gargoyles continued to fall in 1979 and 1980, according to a report by Pierre-Marie Auzas, inspecteur générale des monuments historiques, and later that year 630,000 francs were set aside for the "consolidation and restoration of the balustrade of the gallery of chimeras on the west facade."[9]

The recent high-tech restoration, the largest to have taken place since Viollet-le-Duc's, has, by contrast, almost gone unnoticed by Parisians, despite recent debates about the role of "patrimoine" in French society.[10] The view that restoration is as much to blame as pollution for the demise of buildings was much more common in the past than today, and we seem to accept restoration as we do the face-lifts and makeovers of our favorite movie stars. In an article for the *New York Times* written at the beginning of the project Marlise Simons climbed the scaffolding with Bernard Fonquernie, architect in charge, and Eric Salmon, a master stonecutter. "The men poked at stones so worn they were rounded and flaking. Here, up close, was a wounded gallery of broken gargoyles, monsters without snouts, flowers without their petals."[11] Cleaning work begins with the mechanical removal of loose dirt, birds' nests and droppings, and layers of black gypsum crusts, which can be very thick, using microair abrasion. For the portal sculptures by the anonymous workshops of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and later Geoffroy-Dechaume and Pyanet, the

technique of cleaning included the newest laser technology which is a much more accurate and less abrasive method. This has revealed rich polychromy and other details of the portal sculptures which had been hidden by centuries of dirt. In the case of the chimeras, however, in their much-more-exposed positions high up and at the corners of the edifice, where the original stone surface had blistered and lifted there was no point in using such refined techniques. Many of the smaller gargoyles on the towers were replaced by copies, and a number of the chimeras that had lost their heads, like the great eagle next to the shrouded bird (no. 11), already eroded by the the first decade of the twentieth century (fig. 316), has been replaced by an entirely new statue from the 1990s (fig. 317).

What is it about the face of this leering bird, like another replaced on the other side of the west facade (no. 16) during the restoration of this upper part of the facade in 1996 (fig. 318), that is so disturbing? Viollet-le-Duc's drawings for these birds tended to darken the eyes, making them mysterious, not empathetic. By contrast, the vacuous animality of these creatures as beings of nature has been compromised in a perhaps unconscious sentimentalization. Both have a staring, bug-eyed cuteness mingled with a shocked smirk of self-consciousness that is more Donald Duck than demon. Fundamental to the nineteenth-century chimeras, as I have underlined again and again, is the fact that they seem to "scream in all eternity" but without ever being able to make a sound. This lack makes most of them, like the figure in Edvard Munch's famous image *The Scream*, emblems of the horrific inexpressibility, the stuck-in-the-throatness, of modern life. Yet these two late twentieth-century restored examples seem on the verge of breaking into song. In an era when the French cultural establishment feels threatened more than ever by the multiheaded chimera of American cultural imperialism, such appropriations are dangerous, hidden, and subversive indeed. Just as many French people would probably not want to admit that the pensive demon was an emblem of racism, they would probably be even more horrified to think of an American multinational media giant like Disney having infected the greatest monument of medieval French culture with cuteness!

But the sweet, anthropomorphic quality, visible in these smirky birds, although a characteristic quite alien to Viollet-le-Duc's original chimeras, is, I would submit, not out of keeping with the experiences and desires our own era. Viollet-le-Duc was, I have argued, influenced by the great cartoonists of his day—Grandville and Daumier—so why should these new restorations not also critique the monstrosities of our current globalized mass culture? Something many of Disney's bloated creations embody is how "capital is the Thing *par excellence*: a chimeric apparition which, although it can nowhere be spotted as a positive, clearly delimited entity, nonetheless functions as the ultimate Thing regulating our lives."[12] For anti-American French



316. Postcard showing eroded state of the bird (no. 11), ca. 1910.

317. Shrouded bird and restored eagle (nos. 10 and 11), August 1998. (Photo: Stuart Michaels.)

318. Restored "Disneyfied" bird (no. 16), 2000. (Photo: author.)

viewers much alarmed since the opening of Disneyland Paris in 1992, these new chimeras of the Magic Kingdom can thus serve the useful purpose of representing exactly that horror of the other they were originally supposed to. The new Notre-Dame is haunted by gargoyles who have returned to reclaim one of their original functions—to scare people—embodying the monsters of global (read American) capitalism, ejected from the pure, unsullied center of the French *patrimoine*. A recent article about the cathedral in the left-wing newspaper *Libération* ended with the fact that the cost of the restoration to the state was 21 million francs but added a cynical note that "in 1844 the reconstruction of the facade had been begun because of the renewed popularity of the building inspired by Victor Hugo's novel. Is this chantier, then post-Disney?"[13] My answer would be yes.

Can bright new gargoyles be as effective as old-looking ones? Viollet-le-Duc clearly thought so. In a few more years, after the pollution in Paris reaches even higher levels, these new-cut Disney chimeras will begin to take on the husk-haunted rot of the uncanny. The sardonic work of a thousand tempests—like that on Christmas night 1999, which destroyed a number of pinnacles—a century of automobile fumes, and the droppings of countless pigeons, have made decay part of the chimeras' appeal. Indeed, I would argue that it is precisely this half-eaten, rotting aspect of the gargoyle as an always already decomposing hulk—a being destructive and itself destroyed—which renders it so moving. No matter that the higher reaches of the towers of the west front of Notre-Dame assume more and more the appearance of outcrops of unrecognizable masonry, cliffs of half-featured masks and glowering faces. The fact that these stones are continually being eaten away is in fact crucial to their status as historical objects. Cynics might say that the great demon has been eroded to such an extent that he is no more "authentic" than the thousands of crude,

generalized reproductions of him that are in circulation. But this would be to forget that this process of decay is as crucial to the melancholy demon as his inscrutable pose (fig. 319). Already in 1908 in a famous essay, "On the Modern Cult of Monuments," the Viennese art historian Alois Riegl raised the contradictions inherent in restorations like Viollet-le-Duc's. He advocated allowing the wear and tear to remain in order to reveal or to "preserve" the effect of time upon the historical monument.[14] Restoring an object destroyed its documentary value—making it an unreliable witness to the past—and obscuring its capacity to convey the sense of historical distance, the hundreds of years that have elapsed since its creation. More recently Marc Mayer has described our current urge to make new as an antihistoricism: "If Notre-Dame cathedral, once as brightly painted as the Pompidou Center, were not crumbling like a dried sand castle, its fresh golden stone would make it look more recent than that prematurely disfigured complex known as Beaubourg. . . . The industry that preserves Europe's cultural heritage by cleaning and restoring its monuments—the very presence of the past—is erasing all but the most shallow of temporal dimensions. As the past loses its physical age and thus its emphatic distance from us, it becomes as abstract as the future. . . . Our ideology insists on the simultaneity of all time in the arrogant present. . . . We no longer say 'These are the marvel of the ancients.' We now say, 'We made these wonders.' And they are miraculously clean."[15] This cleaning of the past in recent years, especially in cities in eastern Europe, has been stimulated by a real amnesiac urge to erase the probably more recent past, the soot and darkness of modern industrial pollution, to make our monuments forgetful forms celebrating a pristine, postindustrial, and poverty-stricken future which the unemployed can visit at their leisure.

One might argue that it is not reproduction which erodes the aura of such monuments, but restoration itself. What Benjamin called the "cult value" of the original is, in these sculptures, totally dependent upon their decay. If some magic potion were developed by scientists, some drug for decaying gargoyles that could stop their deterioration forever and leave the cathedral just as white as it is today following the new cleaning, this would, in effect, destroy its status as a historical monument. Once it was no longer disappearing it would be equivalent to a theme-park prop, like the Sleeping Beauty Castle at Disneyland Paris, standing in a kind of eternal glorious simulation of its never-having-been. The chimeras and gargoyles were constructed in this sense, not only as symbolic guardians against the external forces of evil, but also as welcomers of decay, sentinels at the doors of death. On medieval churches gargoyles rotted so quickly, if they did their job properly and carried off water, that only a century or so after they were made they had to be replaced. Not enduring like the saints in stone carved around the doorways below but contingent creatures, often

carved in cruder limestone that had a shorter life, proper gargoyles were eminently replaceable. Like living creatures, they died and were reborn, which is why very few of the thousands of gargoyles on French churches are original to the period of the first building. Like a flaking skin that is continually being sloughed off in order to become living again in the next incarnation, the gargoyle is part of the exoderm of the edifice that replenishes itself every few generations. Thinking of the most recent cleaning as a process of replacement and not restoration, taking out, as the restorers did, rotting stones and replacing them with new ones, is more fruitful. Once one part of the vast edifice is finished, there is another part that needs re-restoring once again. Today, if the western face of the cathedral is bright and clean, its north flank and eastern end, which await restoration, are still blackened and the rows of gargoyles covered in green lichens. This gives one side of the cathedral, the cold, north side, a feeling of ruin returning to nature that is powerful and suggestive. The horned demon and his friends, forced to stand and regard this constant decay and reanimation of the cellular, modular life of the cathedral, which in another thousand years have had every stone in its fabric replaced, are mourners at their own funeral. Their stone skin, at once the most fragile of boundaries and the most complex web of signifiers, has been scraped clean, its broken flesh sutured and sewn up to create a cadaverous cathedral. This seems especially true when compared to the sleek and shiny sanitized surfaces of the Centre Pompidou, over which the melancholy demon looks, somewhat disdainfully from certain angles on the balustrade (fig. 319). Just as the Stryge was once paired with the distant Tour Saint-Jacques, this new architectural mate juxtaposes the demon not with the past of the Middle Ages, but with the future of postmodernity. The highly successful tourist-engorging building, which wears its bright red and blue guts on the outside, and which has already been once restored to hold more of the ever-expanding entrails of modern art, is a tense beast tethered to the cage of ephemerality—which is why it must always stay the same. Notre-Dame, by contrast, is able, partly through its chimeras and gargoyles, to change, to mourn, and thus to move on.

Debates about the role of a monument like Notre-Dame in contemporary France seem to be unable to do more than repeat nineteenth-century tropes. In recent years, to judge by exhibitions and press coverage, Parisians have been far more interested in Egyptian than their own medieval antiquities, perhaps because the exoticism of distance is easier to enjoy than contemplating the "patrimoine," the father's corpse rotting on one's own doorstep. Most Parisians seem almost oblivious to their cathedral. A little monograph in the series Monuments en parole, which aims to make the cathedral speak to contemporary culture, published by the Caisse nationale des monuments historiques in 1992, describes the cathedral as "nothing more than a post-

319. The pensive demon and the Centre Pompidou in the background, May 1991, before restoration. (Photo: Stuart Michaels.)

Gothic carcass, invented or reinvented like a dinosaur by . . . Viollet-le-Duc, the first of the 'postmodern architects.'" These are the words of the author, the poet Alain Jouffroy, for whom Notre-Dame has become a very strange thing indeed—an empty tomb, a sarcophagus inscribed with the mystical mysteries of Fulcanelli and a female symbol, "a colossal, sublime vagina."[16] The book is worth looking at for its powerful black-and-white photographs commissioned from the Moroccan-born photographer Touhami Ennadre. Taken just before the recent restoration project, when many of the sculptures were dark and shadowy ruins, they reveal a cathedral stranger and darker still (fig. 320). Here is Notre-Dame seen from the viewpoint of what we would call a "postcolonial consciousness" but the medievals would have attributed to "the infidel," in which the chimeras come to life more terrifyingly than ever before. Apparently, while struggling to make these images in poor winter light, Ennadre, who

320. Touhami Ennadre, photograph of chimera (no. 40), 1991–92. From *Notre-Dame de Paris*, Monuments en Parole (Paris: CNMHS, 1992). (Photo: CNMHS.)

is neither Muslim nor Christian, was constantly asked by visitors "What is an Arab doing on the balustrade?" The nets that covered the heads and angry mouths of some of the looming chimeras were there to prevent stones from falling off the building, but they also suggest violence contained but about to burst forth.[17] The gargoyles' mouths seem to repel the photographer directly, to instantiate his otherness and to say more powerfully than they have for hundreds of years, "Keep out!"

The inability of contemporary writers to rethink the cathedral in anything other than nostalgic terms was exemplified in a more recent discussion between the philosopher Paul Virilio and the historian Bruno Foucart about a plan to "finish" the cathedral suggested by a group of artists as part of the celebrations for the year 2000. This discussion was published under the title "Our Lady of the Poor" in a special issue of *Monumental* celebrating the cathedral's restoration. The plan had envisaged adding Viollet-le-Duc's projected spires to the facade, even if only in the virtual form of a laser light show. This seems a strange exercise in retrospection indeed, for as Bruno Foucart points out, the very idea of "completing" the Gothic cathedral by putting spires on it is a nineteenth-century, not a medieval, aspiration. Virilio expressed concern that such spectacular simulations might one day come to replace

the building itself (like Lascaux II), arguing that the main "problem" afflicting the church today is "the incessant flow of tourists."[18] In fact, during the Middle Ages cathedrals were not the empty spaces of contemplation we alienated moderns like to imagine, but vital and crowded spaces rather akin to the modern shopping mall, so today's crush of visitors is probably closer to the medieval experience. The cathedral can in Virilio's view regain what he believes was its universalizing medieval function only by incorporating Paris's contemporary marginal "medieval" population—the poor, the homeless, and immigrants! This sounds just like Victor Hugo and Michelet. The philosopher is also quite wrong to think that Notre-Dame was ever an open, welcoming space. During the Middle Ages most of its exterior was not even visible from close up, but was closed off by gates, enclosing on the south side the bishop's private palace, and on the north the Church of Saint-Denis-du-Pas and the private residences of the canons. The rows of gargoyles loomed over these essentially non-public spaces that only in modernity have been opened up as sites of tourist spectacle. Only the facade was visible to "the people" and even then not from a great square below but from directly underneath, where dark medieval streets pushed right up against the west front. Gargoyles (which Virilio does not mention) originally said "Keep out!" not just to other demons, but to heretics, Jews, prostitutes, and "others" of all kinds who sought to enter the sacred space of the bishop and canons, just as they do in Ennadre's recent photographs.

The nineteenth century's dream of progress materialized less smoothly than Viollet-le-Duc had hoped, leaving his gargoyles stranded in a modernity that is still, in many respects, medieval. Although I have argued for a concept of the modern throughout this study, historians of science like Bruno Latour have argued that "we have never been modern."[19] Today a majority of Americans believe in angels. Does that mean the same number believe in devils, like the one carved on the cathedral? The dozen Parisians who go to see the exorcist of Notre-Dame every day must believe so. Our television screens are filled with supernatural stories and vampires, demons, and devils. Yet this does not mean that we believe in what we see or that the replacements of Viollet-le-Duc have the same function as their apotropaic forebears. Repetition does not imply return to a previous point, since repeated actions can never be identical. Although recalling the unique and original former event, repetitions are always excessive, always more than what was there first. Paradoxically, nothing created during the Middle Ages could ever be as medieval as the chimeras, partly because the very concept of "medieval" was a modern invention. That the chimeras embody the "spirit of the Middle Ages" in the Hegelian sense helps explain the success of these "false" statues. Pushing themselves out into our world to attract our attention, they easily steal the show from the saints and sinners carved in the great portals

below, who seem to vanish back into a cavernous past that we can never know. What always surprises me when I watch tourists watching Notre-Dame is how many of them look for a considerable time at the chimeras and gargoyles but then immediately rush inside. Very few linger with the medieval carvings of virtues and vices, saints, prophets, and stories of the Virgin, Christ, and, in the center, the Last Judgment. The way a contemporary visitor experiences the sculpture is fragmented. Since the three doorways are fenced off, and one is supposed to enter at the south door and leave by the north, it is almost impossible to "read" the program in detail. Only those groups being led by a guide stop and stare, which is probably how it was eight hundred years ago.[20] While most individual visitors seem to ignore the portals, what is surprising is that they will then stand in line for hours to climb the 380 steps to see Paris from up among "the gargoyles." The alienated modern consciousness which, I have argued, first created the chimeras continues to draw people to these cherished monsters.

This renewed interest in the "grotesque" has also affected the writing and teaching of medieval historians, who are today much less interested in "modern" institutional and political models created during the Middle Ages, such as the university itself, and more fascinated by the marginal, the monstrous, and the fantastic. Two American medieval historians, Paul Freedman and Gabrielle Spiegel, have described a "shift over the last twenty years from a Middle Ages represented as being in tune with modernity—indeed, the very seed-bed and parent civilization of the modern West—to a more vivid and disturbing image of medieval civilization as the West's quintessential 'other.'"[21] Kathleen Biddick has gone even further in arguing that "since its instititional inception, medieval studies bears a specific historical relation to melancholy, a relation that may be described as an unfinished project of mourning for industrialization (with its imbricated imperialism, colonialism, and traumatic refiguration of the human embodiment of labour)."[22] We are in a sense revisiting many of the themes and anxieties that emerged during the first Gothic revival at the beginning of the nineteenth century—fears about the biological limits of human creation (Frankenstein's monster) and the limits of technology (the Industrial Revolution). That term "Gothic revival" has always struck me as unsatisfactory. It suggests bringing something that is defunct back to life. But did Gothic ever really die? Certainly not during the Renaissance, when it had its so-called last flowering, or even during the Age of Reason that named it. The Middle Ages, the dead epoch in the popular consciousness, is problematically ever present. Gargoyles tend to burst out of the walls of the collective unconscious at crucial moments of historical rupture and uncertainty—in the 1830s, around 1850, in the 1890s, and then again in the 1990s. In this sense interest in them is not always stimulated by a need to resurrect the past, but sometimes by a need to make sure that it is dead. Michel de Certeau has said, in

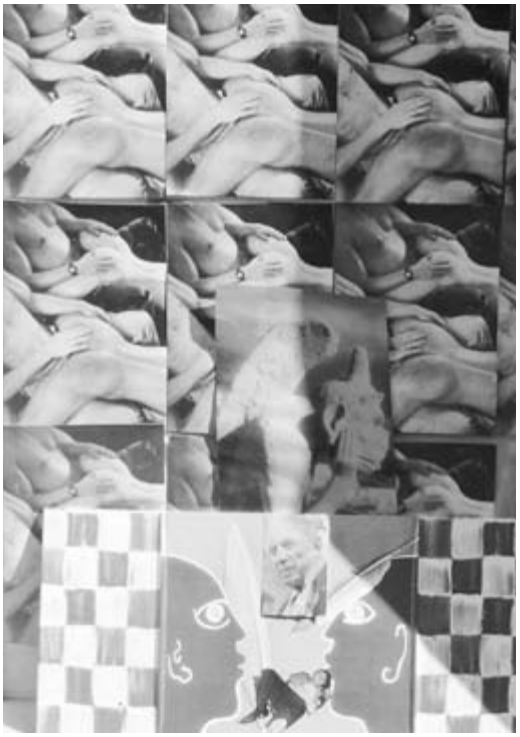
321. Gahan Wilson, cartoon from *New Yorker*.

his study *The Writing of History*, "Historiography . . . promotes a selection between what can be *understood* and what must be *forgotten* in order to obtain the representation of a present intelligibility." In his study of walking in the city he also reminds us that "haunted places are the only ones people can live in," and how absence is fundamental to the construction of historical memory: "What can be seen designates what is no longer here: 'You see, here there used to be . . . ' but it can no longer be seen."[23] The chimeras today in their ruined state embody exactly this status of what used to be. They are monuments to the historical force of oblivion. The gargoyles of Notre-Dame are in this sense less about memory than about forgetting, less about the restoration of the past than about its constant disappearance. A *New Yorker* cartoon by Gahan Wilson captures the sense of memory as a form of forgetting rather nicely. Two men in ancient or eastern garb stand on the parapet of a building and watch the fleeing forms of many winged, horned demons stretching into the distance, one saying to the other, "Maybe if we put stone statues in their place, no one will notice that they've flown away" (fig. 321). This is what Viollet-le-Duc must have said to himself when he first had the idea to create the fifty-four stone creatures for the balustrade in the late 1840s. But what had flown away, or crumbled to dust, was not just stone demons made in the thirteenth century but a whole system of beliefs, phantoms that continued to linger still, in the sense described by Jacques Derrida: "The one who has disappeared appears still to be *there*, and his apparition is not nothing. . . . Assuming that the remains can be identified, we know better than ever today that the dead must be able to work. And to cause to work, perhaps more than ever. There is also a mode of production of the phantom, itself a phantomatic mode of production. As in the work of mourning, after a trauma, the conjuration has to make sure that the

dead will not come back."[24] The gargoyles and chimeras of Notre-Dame have in our time become phantom-replacements in the psychological as well as practical sense of being restorations, since they ensure that their originals—and by association, death in the maw of the monstrous real—will not come back. In this sense they are true guardians at the gate, preventing haunting as well as haunting themselves. What once fixed gargoyles in their place was fear—others would call it faith—whereas it is a deeper sense of loss that animates these modern mourners at God's funeral. Today they remind us of ourselves, only able to look away from the dwelling place of the sacred, questioning, angry, envious, proud in their sensuous existence, but also wanting to know everything, see everything, each isolated and alone. They are stranded objects, lamenting the loss not so much of the Middle Ages, with which they have little in common, but of the modernity that first gave them meaning.

What new and as yet unforseen identities and subjectivities will the gaze of the horned demon embody for tomorrow's viewers? Two images of the pensive demon which show the dead being "put to work" again, in Derrida's sense, on the streets of Paris appeared in the winter of 2000 as I was finishing this book. The first is part of a publicity campaign for the French national telephone company (fig. 322) and the second a window display of a fashion boutique in the Marais (fig. 323). They represent what might be described as the two alternative cultural uses of medievalism today—one manipulative, backward-looking, and nostalgic, and the other more progressive. The first is created by a team of advertisers in order to persuade, while the other is one window dresser's dream. The first example has appeared in posters throughout the Paris metro and on large billboards and has shown the horned demon of Notre-Dame, who has been brought to life yet again, in order to advertise the twenty-first-century communications revolution—"All Paris is connected." From his usual vantage point on the corner of the cathedral tower the Stryge appears to be using a mobile phone (fig. 322). What we see is not a photograph of the actual sculpture on Notre-Dame, although it has all the recognizable elements of Viollet-le-Duc's statue. Rather, it is an oddly similar but totally nonidentical simulation of the plasticity of the demon's form. Another disturbing disjunction in this poster of the cordless chimera is the view of the Eiffel Tower in the distance, which is really on the other side of the Seine from where the famous Parisian personality actually sits. For the purposes of publicity faithfulness to actual experience is of little import. It is symbolic connections that are paramount. The medieval gargoyle is surely meant to be in contact with that preeminent symbol of modern France. The creators of this image were only doing what Charles Méryon had done a hundred and fifty years before when he totally distorted the background of his etching to make the Tour Saint-Jacques loom larger than it actually is. This deformation of the real is possible

322. The pensive demon with mobile phone. Advertisement for France Telecom on the Paris metro, December 2000. (Photo: author.)



323. The pensive demon in the Gay Marais. Window display at no. 8 rue Sainte Croix de la Bretonnerie, Paris, November 2000. (Photo: author.)

only because Viollet-le-Duc's statue at Notre-Dame no longer exists as a referent except in old photographs and etchings. Although its creators probably thought of this ad as an upbeat integration of the Parisian monumental past and present, those of us who have followed my history of the melancholy demon's capacity for subversion know that the Stryge is never just what he seems. Another way to see him here is as a representative of a new category of despised antisocial "other"—the devilish "bo bo" (bohemian bourgeois) whose banal chatter is audible on every corner. Why does a gargoyle need a mobile phone anyway? A hundred years ago popular images showed the chimeras coming to life to look at Paris through a pair of binoculars. This embodied the priority of the gaze and of scopic regimes in general in early modernity. By contrast, current fantasies take us far beyond the ordinary surfaces of the visible and invoke a global network in which everything and everyone is connected. Rather than absorbing the sins of the city as he had done in the nineteteenth century, today the city absorbs him.

Just as a century ago people projected a wide range of vices onto the stone features of the Stryge, people can go on doing the same, especially with the new technology provided by computers, which allows all of us to remake the gargoyle in our own image. The second example of a Stryge for the year 2000 does exactly this, although is a much more old-fashioned affair made with paper and paste. It is a collage in the window of a clothing store at no. 8 rue Sainte Croix de la Bretonnerie in the heart of the Marais district. A soft-focus color photograph of the greatest gargoyle of Notre-Dame from a glossy magazine was pasted in the midst of a variety of found images—a photo of Picasso, a Cocteau drawing, black-and-white scenes of Brassaï's *Paris by Night*, in addition to ironically repeated pornography (fig. 323). A contemporary ethnographer of Paris, Marc Augé, has argued that from the time of Baudelaire Parisian modernity has been about the "active co-existence of various temporalities," in which "different aesthetics can be brought together without annihilating one another."[25] On a monumental state level his examples are the Louvre Pyramid and the Centre Pompidou, but this window display represents much the same thing on the level of the street and the everyday. In December 2000 some of the accompanying images changed to include new cutouts and perfume ads but the melancholy observer at the center remained the same. The image of evil rests unperturbed, while the world around him and its images are forever changing. In contemporary culture the medieval is no longer a category of otherness but a sort of lifestyle choice, which is not necessarily a bad thing. I agree with the scholar of medieval literature and editor of the *Gay and Lesbian Quarterly* Carolyn Dinshaw that "the medieval as well as other dank stretches of time, becomes itself a resource for subject and community formation and materially engaged coalition-building. By using this concept of making relations with the past we realize a temporal dimension of the self and of community."[26] Just as the Stryge became a symbol of sexual perversity in the last fin de siècle, this popular personality of the Parisian "patrimoine" has become a gay gargoyle for the new millenium.

This has been an undercurrent of my argument throughout this book—that the chimeras created for Notre-Dame in the nineteenth century, rather than providing a reactionary sense of continuity between past and present, have always served rather to propel history forward. Great emblems of historical discontinuity, they remind us that cultural objects do not fit easily into the categories we often want to assign for them. They make Notre-Dame, at least in my reading, *not* a medieval monument but one that thinks it is medieval through its fantasy of the gargoyle. Buildings cannot think, you are going to say, but in our own fantasies, at least, monuments have to be capable of cogitation, because it is not we who remember them so much as they who remember (and forget) us. As tombstones of a nature buried by modernity, the chi-

meras of Notre-Dame have played a crucial role in the Parisian imaginary over the past one hundred and fifty years. The unveiling of the newly restored west front of Notre-Dame as part of the celebrations of the new millenium in December 1999 begs that ultimate question. Will the chimeras still be there at the beginning of the next?

A weirdly imagined future dystopia, a glimpse of the city to come, was already provided by a beautifully illustrated 1887 volume, *Paris depuis ses origines jusqu'en l'an 3000*, by Jules Claretie. This is a history of the city from Roman times until the end of the third millenium! Early on is a whole chapter on Notre-Dame, which describes the gargoyles and chimeras as part of a medieval system of symbolism when "the cathedral was the book of the poor" and praises Victor Hugo over Viollet-le-Duc for understanding its stone fantasy, even though Claretie does not realize, like so many of us in the past, that Viollet-le-Duc was the one who created these sculptures, "bizarrely squatting, their heads stretched out at the end of their thin and slender necks, hideous and expressive apes, dragons, owls, their claws stuck to their bodies, the head emerging from the stone."[27] The last two chapters take us, as this book has done, from the distant past to the gargoyles of the future. The final chapter describes Paris in the year 3000, when a group of archaeologists from the new center of civilization called Cénépire sends an archaeological expedition to uncover the buried ruins of Paris. The penultimate chapter celebrates even more fantastically a previous era when the city stood in ruins—the old Trocadero Palace (itself demolished in 1936 to make room for the new Palais de Chaillot) and the Vendôme Column all appear like ghostly ruins, like a Gothic Roman Forum of the future. Notre-Dame stands out at the center of this futuristic tableau of vertiginous gloom. Lizards bask in the sun on its altars, and stone by stone it crumbles into nothing. Only the fallen statues of the chimeras have endured as guardians of the gate of decay, fulfilling what I have described as their role of monumentalizing mourning: "On the earth rest this whole race of dragons, ghouls, owls, sinister naked demons who were cast down from the Gothic church. Half-broken, they sleep in the high grass, covered little by little, submerged beneath the rising sea of brush and bracken. In the evening, when night has come, while the moon slowly advances across the passing clouds, silver rays cast their fantastic gleam on the ruins . . . nature persists, immutable and untouched by the revolutions and things of men. Cities pass away, peoples disappear, but nature remains eternal."[28] This is the myth that has sustained Notre-Dame, as it has sustained all monuments up to the present day: that despite being bereft of their original function and even in their crumbling decay, the stones, and especially those elements like gargoyles that are a frozen "nature" will endure.

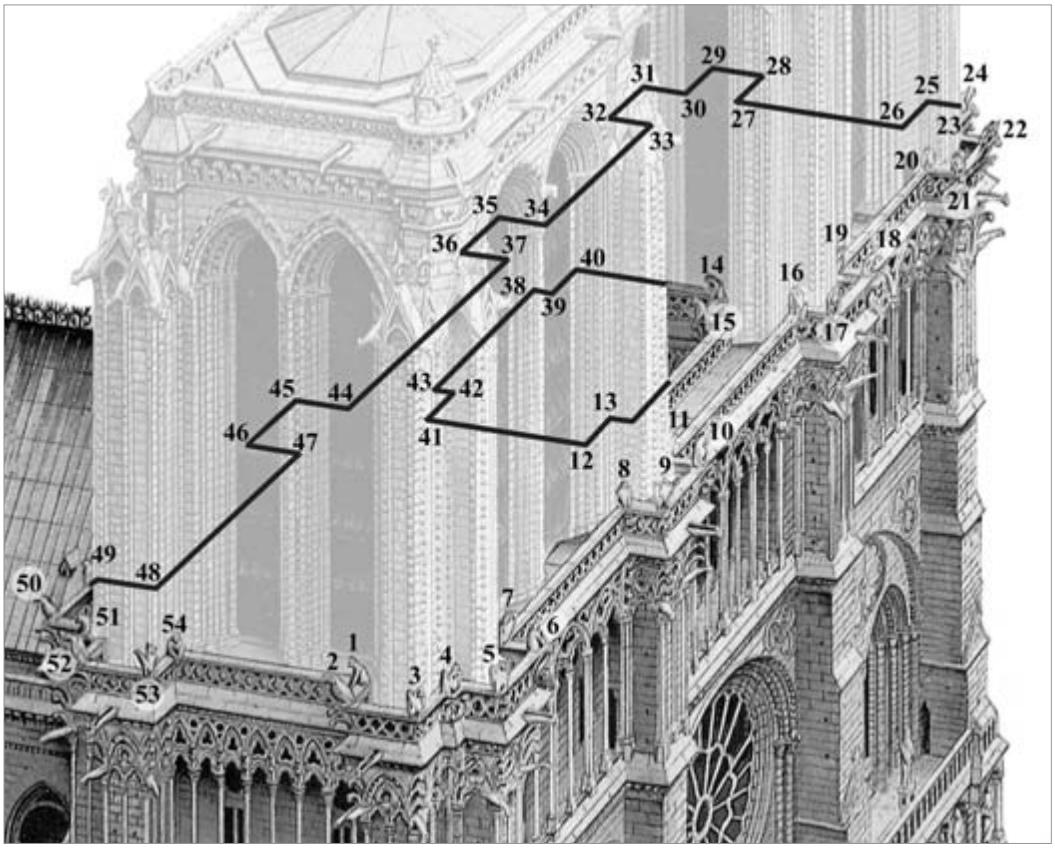
This same nineteenth-century trope of the gargoyle's eternal attention was replayed again in a recent Hollywood apocalyptic blockbuster about the end of the

world, *Armageddon* (1998). In a climactic scene the city of Paris, along with the whole earth, is about to be destroyed, not by an atomic bomb (modernity's nightmare) but by a meteorite (postmodernity's fear of nature's inevitable claim). *The* demon of Notre-Dame appears in the foreground in silhouette (fig. 324), watching the fire fall from the sky as the end of the world begins. It is not a real end, of course. The movie ends with the planet's being saved by the all-American hero. Something not unlike this dream of dreaded and simultaneously desired destruction was also shared by nineteenth-century Parisians, who saw whole neighborhoods laid waste as their medieval city fell under the hammers, picks, and shovels of modernization. Viollet-le-Duc's incarnation of demonic attention embodies this very tension between destruction and hope, between past and present, obsolescence and modernity. Paradoxically, he has nothing to do with Christian eschatology—the Last Judgment carved in magnificent immediacy of the here and now, happening forever in the central doorway far below. Here God at the center has eternally returned to judge "the quick and the dead" and consign the damned to hell and the saved the heaven. The chimeras in their eager leaning forward and expectant gazes were not conceived to be part of this final event in Christian history, but appear forever poised on the brink of oblivion, waiting for a Last Judgment that has been postponed by modernity. It will never happen. Or will it? The sad demon is also reminiscent of Walter Benjamin's demonic angel of history, as described in his ninth thesis, irresistibly propelled into the rubble of the future to which his back is turned. Or even more ominously, the Stryge recalls his prophecy at the end of "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" that mankind's "self-alienation has reached such a degree that it can experience its own destruction as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order."[29] If we no longer await the blast of the atomic holocaust or the sudden shock of the meteorite, it is perhaps a more creeping, slower annihilation that we both fear and relish today, the blistering erosion of our skin and the submergence of our cities due to global warming in addition to the depletion of the very air we breathe because of pollution. Witnesses of our own decay, we human beings seem as powerless and obdurate in our refusal to act as the chimeras of Notre-Dame, and similarly we stand alone, isolated in our fearsome individuality. Finally, what these stone fantasies suggest more than anything is that although we like to imagine ourselves obsolete, we also like to dream that our subjectivity exists in the light of something eternal, something that was before and will exist beyond us, in the gaze of the gargoyle.

324. The pensive demon watching the end of the world. Still from *Armageddon*, directed by Michael Bay, 1998.

Appendix: The Chimeras

(a list and photographic survey)



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Notes

The death of the author in 2002 left a number of bibliographic questions unanswered. In some cases in which further research did not supply the necessary information, it was considered more useful to the reader to retain the incomplete citations than to eliminate them entirely.

—The Editors

Preface

1. For the architectural importance of the cathedral see the works by Aubert, Erlande-Brandenburg, Murray, and W. Clark and R. Mark listed in the bibliography. A building chronology is given in Bruzelius, p. 568.
2. The cathedral is the subject of an essay by Alain Erlande-Brandenburg in the ambitious multivolume series edited by Pierre Nora titled *Les Lieux de mémoire*, or "Places of memory," about France's construction of its past. Deemed part of "the collective unconscious," it is one of "those sacred monsters which are symbols of Paris, rivaling the Eiffel Tower, the Pompidou Center, the Louvre, and the Tomb of Napoléon." But this essay on the long history of the monument does not mention the actual monsters that adorn this "sacred monster" and that form the subject of this book. Erlande-Brandenburg, "Notre-Dame de Paris," pp. 359.
3. Sitwell, p. 77.
4. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 8:14.
5. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, "De la construction des édifices religieux," *Annales archéologique*, p. 3: "un signe de détresse, une ressource extrême qu'emploient les intelligences lorsqu'elles désespèrent du présent."

Chapter One

1. Deleuze and Guattari, p. 133.
2. Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc, *Projet de restauration*, p. 3.
3. For revolutionary vandalism in general see Beurdeley; and at Notre-Dame see Erlande-Brandenburg and Kimpel; and Réau, pp. 380–82.
4. The manuscript 80/14/10 in the Archives de la Médiatheque de l'architecture et du patrimoine has the full reference and title M. Ouradou, *Journal rédigé par l'inspecteur au chef des travaux de restauration de la métropole*.
5. For the competition see Montalembert, *Rapport*; Bercé, *Les Premiers Travaux*, p. 226; Leniaud, *Jean-Baptiste Lassus*, pp. 61–63; and Denslagen, pp. 84–125; and for a broader discussion of this issue at Vézelay and Notre-Dame in Paris, see K. Murphy, pp. 71–83, 128, and 144–48.
6. Didron, "Rapport à M. Cousin," pp. 63–64.
7. Adolphe-Napoléon Didron, "Notre-Dame est solide et n'a pas besoin de réparation," *L'Univers* 5 (1841): 311.
8. Montalembert and Didron, "Réparation de la cathédrale," p. 128: "MM. Lassus et Viollet-Leduc sont architectes et, comme tels, enclins fatalement, malgré eux, à faire du neuf."
9. Schmit, *Nouveau Manuel complèt de l'architecte*, p. 62.
10. "Le Vieux Monuments ont fait toilette," *Le Journal amusant*, no. 6, 9 February 1856, p. 2.
11. Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc, *Projet de restauration*, pp. 3–4.
12. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, "Entretien et restauration des cathèdrales," p. 113.
13. See Leniaud, *Jean-Baptiste Lassus,* p. 80: "Votre commision, déclarait-il à la Chambre des Pairs, proteste formellement contre l'idée d'habiller à neuf toutes les vieilles cathédrales."
14. Daly, p. 140.
15. See Guilhermy and Viollet-le-Duc, p. 15.
16. Aubert, *La Cathédrale*, p. 133: "complètement reconstitués, d'après les témoins, biens effacés d'ailleurs, qui subsistaient encore." This is repeated by Léon, *La Vie des monuments français*, p. 384.
17. See Mortet, pp. 34–53; Kimpel and Suckale, pp. 334–35; Erlande-Brandenburg, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, p. 154; and Bru-

zelius, pp. 567–68. For early thirteenth-century gargoyles see Bridaham, pp. 23–50.
18. For the importance of the bells see Mortet; and Singer, pp. 66–69.
19. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 1:22.
20. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 1:23.
21. Mâle, p. 78.
22. P. Vitry, 1:13–14: "restaurations . . . maladroites . . . peut-être parfois trop radicales et trop inventives . . . sous l'architecte Millet en 1878." Bridaham, p. 81, makes the same mistake in calling these chimeras "original types."
23. These late medieval parallels are also suggested by Michon, "Viollet-le-Duc et le bestiare médiéval," p. 295. Chimera-like beasts appear on a group of much earlier Romanesque churches in Alsace, like Rosheim and Murbach, for which see Reinle. None of the supposedly "original types" of chimera illustrated by Bridaham, pp. 80–100, are comparable.
24. Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc, *Projet de restauration*, p. 18.
25. For the 1744 *procès verbal* see Aubert, *La Cathédrale*, p. 38.
26. Gueffur, p. 11: "une infinité de canaux et tuyaux en forme d'animaux, travaillés très artistement, pour écouler les eaux"; and Gilbert, *Description historique* (1811), p. 15.
27. Chapuy, p. 3.
28. See the little crouching man and animal in Leconte's drawing of the *galerie des réservoirs*, Leconte, pl. 10; reproduced in J. Mayer, p. 40, figs. 5 and 6. For Viollet-le-Duc's restoration of this central portal see the exhaustive analysis by Taralon.
29. "Des divers modes d'écoulement des eaux dans les édifices," pp. 347–48.
30. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, "De la construction des édifices religieux," *Annales archéologiques* (1845): 346–47.
31. The twenty-nine-page text, Ministère de l'instruction publique et des cultes, *L'Instruction pour la conservation, l'entretien, et la restauration des édifices diocésains* (1849), is discussed in Leniaud, *Jean-Baptiste Lassus*, pp. 82–83.
32. Hearn, "Viollet-le-Duc: A Visionary among the Gargoyles," in *The Architectural Theory*, p. 15.
33. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 8:25.
34. Ibid., 6:21–28.
35. Ibid., 6:21–22.
36. Photographs of the old, deposed gargoyles are reproduced in Bridaham, pp. 23–24. They were later taken to the Carnavelet Museum along with other elements removed during restoration; see Wilesme, pp. 111–12. For gargoyles later displayed in the form of casts at the Musée de sculpture comparée see Camille, "Gargouilles: Fantômes du patrimoine."
37. Meyer, p. 43; and Baudot and Roussel, pl. A 16.
38. Kurmann, pp. 56–63.
39. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Lectures*, 1:300.
40. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 2:74.
41. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Lectures*, 1:303–4.
42. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 8:144.
43. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Lectures*, 1:302.
44. Ibid., 1:26.
45. Archives nationales, F 19-7811.
46. Diderot and d'Alembert, 3:338.
47. Ramée, *Dictionnaire*, s.v. "Chimère": "Monstre fabuleux qui, selon les poètes, avait la tête et le cou d'un lion, le corps d'une chèvre et la queue d'un dragon."
48. Chateaubriand, pp. 801–2.
49. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Lectures*, 1:25–26.
50. Ibid., 1:26.
51. Ibid., 1:26–27.
52. Étex, p. 5.
53. Ferdinand de Guilhermy, "Trente ans d'archéologie," p. 252. [No further details on this work have been found.—*Eds*.]
54. For partial descriptions see Baudot and Roussel, A 10 and 12; Bercé and Foucart, nos. 30 and 31; and J. Mayer, pp. 38–43.
55. See Sauvageot pp. 78–79; and also Boudon, p. 95.
56. Sauvageot, p. 104.
57. Leniaud, *Jean-Baptiste Lassus*, p. 33–34, and for his drawings, pp. 260–61.
58. Lassus. Solange Michon, who reproduces the demon from fol. 1 of the sketchbook as a source for the pensive demon (see Michon, "Viollet-le-Duc et le bestiare médiéval," p. 295, fig. 10), calls the sculpture "le Stryge" from the start, but the name "le Stryge" was not invented until 1861 by Charles Méryon, as Michon herself points out on p. 297. This convincing parallel suggests that Viollet-le-Duc and Lassus thought of the creature more as a generic devil.
59. J. Mayer, p. 42.
60. Reproduced in Leniaud, *Jean-Baptiste Lassus*, fig. 45.
61. See Leniaud, *Jean-Baptiste Lassus*, p. 3; and "Viollet-le-Duc and Lassus," p. 14.
62. Cited in Leniaud, *Jean-Baptiste Lassus*, p. 122.
63. Michon, "Viollet-le-Duc et le bestiare médiéval," p. 293.
64. Foucault, *Les Anormaux*, p. 52.
65. Two previous scholars who have explored the iconographic sources of the pensive demon are Pressouyre, p. 148, who emphasizes like myself contemporary models; and Michon, pp. 293–97, who cites more medieval parallels.
66. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 8:247.
67. See d'Ayzac. For more on this interesting figure see Prache, "Félicie d'Ayzac," pp. 145–50.
68. Cahier and Martin, p. 76.
69. Auber, title page: "Nécessaire aux architectes, aux théologiens, aux peintres-verriers, aux decorateurs, aux archéologues et à tous ceux qui sont appelés à diriger la Construction ou la Restauration des édifices réligieux."
70. Mâle, pp. 49–64.
71. Ibid., p. 59

72. Ibid.
73. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 1:23.
74. Vitet, p. 125.
75. Ramée, *Manuel*, p. 367: "le plus grand art du moyen age est laïc."
76. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, "Histoire de la caricature," p. 35, reiterated his view that Gothic art is inherently rational and that it "might better be designated under the name of lay art" (serait mieux désigné sous le nom de l'art laique).
77. See Furetière, p. 725, and Auber, 2:336 n. 2, who refutes Huet's opinion in favor of the etymology given by Cahier and Martin.
78. Guilhermy and Viollet-le-Duc, p. 45: "Le démonographie de Notre-Dame a déployé une imagination singulière dans les formes de ses diables et dans l'invention de ses supplices."
79. For William of Auvergne's demonology see Valois, pp. 213–33.
80. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 5:32.
81. Elworthy, p. 30; and Heath, p. 205. For a visual history of fear, which is so understudied, see Warner.
82. Freud, "The Uncanny," p. 361; see also Cixous, pp. 199–216; and for the historical genesis of the notion Vidler, pp. 17–45; and Germer, pp. 161–62.
83. Cixous, p. 528.
84. Vidler, p. 4.
85. Hugo, *Notre-Dame of Paris* (1978), p. 187.
86. For the history of the sphinx see Demisch; and for nineteenth-century France, Humbert. Piranesi's Café d'Inglese design has chimerical beasts on the pediment reproduced in Baltrusaitis, *La Quête d'Isis*, p. 135.
87. Delon, p. 184.
88. Boissard, p. 55.
89. Médiatheque du patrimoine, carton 2117-3-1849–52.

Chapter Two

1. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 8:173.
2. Ibid., 8:173.
3. J. Mayer, pp. 38 and 45. Jacques-Eugène Caudron died in 1848 and should not be confused with his more famous contemporary who had the same name.
4. Archives nationales, F 19-7804, 9 March 1847.
5. Bénézit, 8:533: "Victor Pyanet, sculpteur d'ornements, travaillant à Paris en 1833."
6. See the documents for the restoration of the Sainte-Chapelle, Médiatheque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, 2069, Paris, 12 October 1849: "M. Pyanet sculpteur d'ornements très capable et qui choisi par M. Duban s'est aquitté parfaitement de sa tâche." The documents also note how difficult it is to find carvers of this quality who are able to execute "des sculptures dans le style du moyen âge."
7. Archives nationales, F 19-7807, a "devis estimatif dressé par Pyanet le 22 Janvier 1847."
8. "Je soussigné Victor Joseph Pyanet sculpteur demeurant à Paris rue Furstemburg, m'oblige et m'éngage à l'éxecuter tout les travaux de sculpture à face de la cathédrale de Paris pour la restauration de la façade principale et des quatre faces exterieures des tours . . . montant à la somme de cent vingt trieze mille dix cent quinze francs 25 centimes . . . approuvé par decision de Monsieur le Ministre 15 April 1847 conforment aux dessin ou modeles soumis par les architectes." Approved by the minister's seal on 31 May. Archives nationales, F 19-7811.
9. Archives nationales, F 19-7811: "Étage de la platforme au pied de la tour sculpté les grandes bêtes *ou Chimeres* d'amortissement, placé sur le Balustrade 29 grandes Bêtes d'amortissement ayant 1,30 hauteur toutes variés a 420," crossed out and replaced by "350 l'un et pour 29 ensemble 12180," crossed out 10150 in red. Signed by Pyanet, Inspector Boeswillwald, and Viollet-le-Duc.
10. See Louis, p. 68.
11. "Remis à M. Piannet 2 dessins de bêtes d'amortissement pour la balustrade de la tour portant les no. 7 & 8"; "remis à monsieur Piannet un dessin d'une de bêtes . . . no. 11."
12. "La bête d'angle de la balustrade au dessus de la galerie à jour, commandé le 11 à été terminé; 2 sculpteurs ont été employé a ce travail (bouc)."
13. "2 sculpteurs ont commencé la bête place sous la portale sud devait representer un aiglon destiné à la balustrade de la galerie du jour."
14. For contemporary trades like furniture making, which parallels that of building in many respects, see Auslander, p. 169.
15. See Kimpel, "La Développement"; and the catalogue edited by Recht, *Les Batisseurs*, for medieval practices.
16. Du Colombier, p. 225, and Morancé, p. 12, attribute them to Geoffroy-Dechaume. Erlande-Brandenburg, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, pp. 226–32, counts only those sculptors who created individual statues. In the list of sculptors in the 1980 exhibition someone called "Barruet" is described as the "auteur de chimères de Notre Dame," and in the same catalogue Pyanet is simply listed as one of those working at Notre-Dame in 1847 (pp. 406–7). Only in the past year has his name finally appeared in the literature, in Macé de Lepinay's essay on Geoffroy-Dechaume, pp. 157–71; and in Jannie Mayer's important article on the ornamental sculptors, which notes Pyanet's importance, see J. Mayer, pp. 44–45.
17. See the *devis* of 22 January 1847, signed by Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc, assigning Pyanet these "5 groupes d'animaux," Archives nationales, F 19-7807. For this part of the portal before the restoration see plate fragments (b) in Chapuy.
18. See Agulhon, "La 'Statuomanie,'" pp. 137–85.
19. See Sophie Lagabrielle in *De plâtre et d'or*, p. 108: "La méthode de création de Geoffroy-Dechaume et de son

équipe, qui repose sur l'estampage, a été en grande partie responsable de ce syndrome de la répétition."
20. See Kenaan-Kedar, pp. 143–46; and Benton, "Gargoyles," p. 162.
21. These documents describe how all the sculptures had to conform to the models given by the architects, finished works could be refused if they did not adhere to this rule, and, even more surprising, the cost of the stone was then to be paid for by the sculptor! Archives nationales, F19-7807; see also J. Mayer, p. 42.
22. *Journal des travaux*, 12 August 1853: "Avis a été donné à Monsieur Pyanet de rembourser à la fabrique la somme de soixante-six francs montant de la valeur des chaises qui ont été disparues ou cassées pendant le cours des travaux."
23. Erlande-Brandenberg, "La Restauration," p. 29; Bercé, "'Le Recrutement des architects," p. 7.
24. Fonquernie, pp. 24–25.
25. Nadaud, p. 216.
26. *Journal des travaux*, p. 207.
27. See Janis and Sartre, p. 146, no. 354.
28. Macé de Lepinay reproduces these photographs.
29. Rancière, p. 6.
30. Nadaud, pp. 156–57.
31. For a fuller analysis of the 1848 revolution's impact on the restoration see chap. 5 below.
32. Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment*, p. 38.
33. G. Viollet-le-Duc, "An Interview," p. 15. See also G. Viollet-le-Duc, "Viollet-le-Duc et ses ouvriers," 3:376.
34. See Didron, "Statuts de la Société," pp. 237 and 241: "les monuments de notre pays comme une des plus précieuses parties du trésor de la nation."
35. Leniaud, *Jean-Baptiste Lassus*, p. 40, cites Guilhermy as saying "Notre Société nationale archéologique" failed because Didron had never really been sympathetic toward the group, "qui tend évidemment à le détrôner et à républicaniser l'archéologie."
36. Leniaud, *Les Cathédrales au XIXe siècle*, p. 41.
37. Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*, 2:163.
38. See Pevsner.
39. Mackail, *The Life of William Morris*, p. 75; Leniaud, *Jean-Baptiste Lasuus*, p. 81. For another English critique of the restoration see Freeman.
40. Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*, 3:143.
41. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Histoire d'un dessinateur*, p. 302.
42. Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*, 3:128.
43. Ibid., 3:142 and 157.
44. Ibid., 3:157.
45. Traugott, *The French Worker*, p. 21.
46. This information was gleaned from my own reading of the *Journal des travaux* and from unpublished notes by M. Auzas prepared for his edition of the *Journal* which never appeared, available at the Archives de la Médiatheque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, carton 80/14/10 Fonds Auzas MS 471.
47. Archives de patrimoine, under Seine et Oise, Poissy: "M. Pyanet chargé des travaux des sculptures pour l'Église de Poissy était mort le printemps dernier." This answers Jannie Mayer's question about the date of his death in her recent article, p. 45.
48. Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc, *Projet de restauration*, p. 8.

Chapter Three

1. Foucault, "Fantasia of the Library," p. 90.
2. Mallion, p. 524.
3. These caricatures are reproduced in Georgel, pp. 88 and 94.
4. Hugo, *Oeuvres poétiques*, p. 341.
5. For the importance of illustrations of the novel see Le Men, *La Cathédrale illustrée*, pp. 65–74; and Le Men, "Les Frontispieces."
6. Pierre Dessauret, *Procès-verbaux*, pp. 156–57. [No further details on this work have been found.—*Eds*.] For the competition see Bercé, *Les Premiers Travaux*, p. 226; Leniaud, *Jean-Baptiste Lassus*, pp. 61–63; K. Murphy, pp. 145–48; Denslagen, pp. 84–125.
7. Hugo, *Notre-Dame of Paris* (1978), p. 70.
8. Ibid., introduction, p. 17.
9. Ibid., p. 126.
10. Ibid., p. 164.
11. Ibid, p 166.
12. Ibid., p. 350.
13. Ibid., p. 169.
14. Ibid., p. 486.
15. Bertrand, p. 45. For the author's projected list of illustrations, see p. 9.
16. Sauerländer, *Gothic Sculpture in France*, p. 7.
17. Hugo, *Cromwell*, préface, p. 74.
18. Millin, 1:71.
19. For the semantic development of the term see Clayborough, pp. 12–18.
20. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 6:20–21.
21. Boissard, p. 55.
22. Reybaud, *Jérôme Paturot*, pp. 245–46.
23. Ibid., p. 248.
24. Pingeot, p. 61.
25. Hugo, *Notre-Dame of Paris* (1978), p. 362.
26. Challamel, p. 229.
27. Hugo, *Notre-Dame of Paris* (1978), p. 187.
28. Ibid., p. 188.
29. Ibid., p.194–96.
30. "Liberté et de l'activité intellectuelle avant l'invention de l'imprimerie" and of its demise "depuis la presse" quoted in Lallemand, pp. 122–23.
31. Hugo, *Notre-Dame of Paris* (1978), p. 193.

32. Ibid., pp. 192–93.
33. Michelet, *History of France*, p. 331.
34. Didron made this argument in his *Iconographie chrétienne*, written in 1841 and published in 1843, and again in his essay "Statuaire des cathédrales de France," p. 46. See Brissac and Leniaud, "Adolphe-Napoléon Didron," pp. 34–41.
35. See Levine, "The Book and the Building"; and Le Men, *La Cathédrale illustrée*, p. 80.
36. Stewart, pp. 37–38. For the book metaphor in modern culture see Blumenberg; and for a broad overview of the use of this metaphor, Curtius.
37. Mallion, pp. 653–54.
38. Hugo, *Notre-Dame of Paris* (1978), pp. 192–93.
39. Ibid., p. 128.
40. Ibid., p. 190.
41. Ibid., p. 124.
42. Ibid., p. 126.
43. Hugo, *Oeuvres poétiques*, p. 787.
44. Hugo, *Notre-Dame of Paris* (1978), p. 131.
45. De Goncourt and de Goncourt, p. 935, 14 February 1863.
46. For the panorama see Janis, pp. 19–20; Maxwell, pp. 34–35; and Oetermann, pp. 8–10.
47. Brice, 4:188: "Le dessus de ces tours est en terrasse où l'on peut commodement voir tout la ville."
48. Von Raumer, 2:127, translated in Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, p. 397.
49. Hugo, *Notre-Dame of Paris* (1978), p. 131.
50. Ibid., pp. 148–51.
51. Rosen and Zerner, p. 84.
52. Hugo, *Notre-Dame of Paris* (1978), pp. 144–45.
53. Troche, *La Tour de Saint Jacques*, p. 70.
54. See the exhibition catalogue *Soleil d'encre*, p. 87.
55. Troche, p. 44.
56. Hugo, *Notre-Dame of Paris* (1978), p. 414.
57. Ibid., p. 415.
58. Ibid., p. 420.
59. Taylor, p. 434.
60. Hugo, *La Fin de Satan*, cited in Jeffrey Russell, p. 198; and Zumthor.
61. Michelet, *Histoire de France* (1876), vol. 2, *Éclaircissements*, translated in Barthes, p. 44.
62. Michelet, *Histoire de France* (1876), 1:663, citing A. P. M. Gilbert, *Description historique de la basilique métropolitaine de Paris* (1821), p. 56; see Frankl, p. 487.
63. Michelet, *History of France*, p. 331.
64. Michelet, *Journal*, 1:81.
65. For Michelet's "many Middle Ages" see Le Goff's great article, "The Several Middle Ages of Jules Michelet"; as well as Dakyns, pp. 42–47; and the study by L. Richer.
66. Michelet, *Journal*, 1:113–14.
67. Michelet, *Histoire de France* (1876), vol. 2, *Éclaircissements*, cited in Barthes, pp. 43–44.
68. Michelet, *Journal*, 1:115.
69. Ibid., 1:554.
70. L. Richer, p. 228.
71. Michelet, *Journal*, 1:164–65.
72. Michelet, *Histoire de France*, translated in Le Goff, "The Several Middle Ages of Jules Michelet," p. 19.
73. Ibid., p. 551.
74. Mérimée, "Le Vampire," in *La Guẓla*, p. 90.
75. See Michon, "Viollet-le-Duc et le bestaire médiéval," p. 297, who also notes that Viollet-le-Duc had a book on vampires in his library.
76. Mérimée, "Le Vampire," in *La Guẓla*, p. 90; see also Praz, p. 79.
77. Cited in Stafford, "From 'Brilliant Ideas' to 'Fitful Thoughts,'" p. 329, who discusses theories of apparitions in relation to Goya's print on p. 353.
78. See Panofsky, Saxl, and Klibansky, *Saturn and Melancholy*, for the ancient and medieval tradition. For its romantic manifestations, see Préaud; and Hauptman. Bourgeois melancholy is treated by Lepenies and by Chambers; and for Benjamin's modern take on melancholy see Pensky's book as well as Camille, "Walter Benjamin and Dürer's *Melencolia I*."
79. For changing conceptions of the devil in this period see the fundamental literary study by Milner, *Le Diable dans la littérature française*; and the survey by Jeffrey Russell and by Muchembled; and for the visual arts the more anecdotal studies by Villeneuve.
80. *Le Figaro*, 3 May 1834, cited in Milner, *Le Diable dans la littérature française*, 1:520.
81. Gauthier quoted in Rudwin, p. 48. See also Dakyns, pp. 17–43; Milner, *Le Diable dans la littérature française*, 1:402–562; and Jeffrey Russell, pp. 168–213.
82. Cited in Milner, *Le Diable dans la littérature française*, 1:412.
83. Hugo, *Les Misérables*, p. 595.
84. This source was first pointed out by Holcomb, "*Le Stryge de Notre-Dame*," p. 153.
85. Chotard, *Alfred de Vigny et les arts*, p. 75.
86. Farwell, p. 20.
87. De Certeau, "The Theater of the *Quiproquo*," p. 151–52.
88. Pressouyre, p. 148, cited one of Breton's engravings as a source for the pensive demon.
89. Cited in Porter, p. 270; see also Devlin, pp. 223–24.
90. M. Macario cited in Porter, p. 270.
91. See Devlin, pp. 136–38; and Porter, pp. 260 and 271.
92. See Abélès, pp. 6–7.
93. *Le Diable à Paris*, vol. 4, p. 14.
94. Caradec and Masson, *Guide de Paris mystérieux*, 3:170–71.
95. Hugo, *Notre-Dame of Paris* (1978), p. 25.
96. For Chateaubriand's description in the *Voyage en Orient* and this urge to inscribe see Hamon, p. 47. For the use of this trope by illustrators and by photographers like Henri Le Secq, see Le Men, "Les Frontispieces"; and Frizot, fig. 1.

97. "Il est défendu très expressément d'écrites sur les plombes [ou] sur les murs, de sonner les cloches, de jeter quelque chose de dessus les tours, et de faire aucunes ordures sous peine d'amende." See fig. 32, top left, for an early view of this plaque.
98. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Lectures*, 2:238.
99. See Haskell, pp. 371–73.
100. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, "Histoire de la caricature," p. 35: "L'auteur se déclare l'ennemi des *symbolisateurs* c'est ainsi qu'il designe un certain nombre d'archéologie qui prétendu donner tout manifestation peinte ou sculptée une signification religieuse ou sociale."
101. Ibid.: "M. Champfleury vient de donner au public, sous une couverture couleur de feu, un petit livre qui . . . soulever d'amères critiques."

Chapter Four

1. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *L'Art russe*, p. 259: "Les études historiques, ethnographiques, anthropologiques ne sont point une chimère."
2. Wright, *A History of Caricature*, pp. 73–74.
3. See Stafford, *Body Criticism*, pp. 84–129; Pogliano, pp. 238–65; and Baridon and Guédron, pp. 61–108.
4. Wechsler, pp. 20–42; Le Men and Abélès, pp. 20–27.
5. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Histoire de l'habitation*, p. 26.
6. Ibid., p. 124.
7. See the important studies by Thaon, p. 131; Van Eck; and most recently Baridon.
8. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Entretiens sur l'architecture*, translated in *Lectures*, 1:340. For fuller discussion see Leniaud, *Viollet-le-Duc*, p. 46; and Baridon, pp. 46–48.
9. See Baridon and Guédron, pp. 129–66.
10. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Lectures*, 1:343. For racist traditions in physiognomic theory more generally see Blankenburg.
11. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 8:247.
12. Lavater, *Physiognomische Fragmente*, p. 258.
13. Warwick, p. 11; Gilman, "Are Jews White?" p. 235; and David.
14. Winckelmann, 3:131.
15. See Silvain, p. 172, for more examples from postcards of the early nineteenth century; as well as the exhibition catalogue *Abgestempelt*.
16. Blanckaert; and Baridon, p. 489.
17. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Histoire d'un dessinateur*, p. 137.
18. Robert Knox, *The Races of Men*, p. 134, quoted from Gilman, *The Jew's Body*, p. 174.
19. Cited in Poliakov, *Histoire de l'antisémitisme*, p. 207.
20. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 8:118; see Baridon, p. 51.
21. See Sorel, "La Phrénologie et l'art," pp. 266–79.
22. For the impact of phrenology on David d'Angers see *Dantan Jeune*, pp. 57–59; and Baridon and Guédron, pp. 129–66.
23. Benjamin, *Illuminations*, pp. 192–93.
24. Quoted in Baltrusaitis, *Aberrations*, p. 19.
25. "Il lui avait mis la langue dans la bouche." Procès-verbal du juge de paix de Vermonton, 29 June 1875 (A. D. Yonne, 2U 143), cited in Sohn, p. 94, who also notes that "le baiser sur la bouche . . . est reprouvé par la majorité des français au XIXe siècle. Il semble même plus érotique que des attouchements génitaux."
26. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Esthétique appliquée*, p. 15.
27. See de Medeiros for medieval representations of blacks.
28. Marc-Bayeux, p. 78.
29. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire raisonné du mobilier français*, s.v. "chapeau."
30. Rouart; Poliakov, *Histoire de l'antisémitisme*, pp. 193–203.
31. Quinet, p. 229.
32. Ibid., p. 234: "Ma cathédrale, c'est assez."
33. Ibid.
34. Sue, *Le Juif errant*; see Rütten, Jung, and Schneider, pp. 187–90.
35. Cited in Poliakov, *Histoire de l'antisémitisme*, p. 194.
36. *Le Père Duchêne*, May 1848.
37. Silvain, pp. 166–67. For visual anti-Semitism later in the century see Morowitz.
38. Poliakov, *Histoire de l'antisémitisme*, p. 195.
39. Cahier, *Nouveaux Mélanges*, 1:314: "(à propos du hibou, grand-duc, ou tout autre oiseau de nuit).—J'aurais pu dire avec quelque opportunité, que la comparaison des juifs avec une chouette persiste encore à Londres. Le cri du moyen duc (*Otus*) est *clow! cloud!* ce qui, pour les Anglais moqueurs, rappelle un israélite marchand de vieux habits (*clothes*)."
40. Ramée, *Théologie cosmogonique*, p. 360: "La cathédrale du XIIIe siècle n'est pas chrétienne."
41. Ibid., pp. 470–71: "Le sang semitique-arabe en Europe aime tout ce qui est aléatoire." The footnote reads, "l'élément phénicien-semite, connu sous le nom de juif en Europe."
42. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Lectures*, 2:259.
43. See the classic study by Janson.
44. Bernard et al., *Le Jardin des plantes*, 1:89.
45. See Bernheimer for this theme in medieval art.
46. Baridon, pp. 157–62.
47. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 7:522–23.
48. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Histoire d'un dessinateur*.
49. Nadaud, p. 142.
50. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Histoire d'un dessinateur*, pp. 114 and 125. See Baridon, pp. 153–62.
51. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 1829, 4; see Baridon, pp. 157–58.
52. Bernard et al., *Le Jardin des plantes*, 1:84.
53. Ibid., 1:85.
54. Ibid., 1:82.
55. Quoted in Lubbock, p. 6.

56. Boitard, p. 247.
57. Ibid., p. 249.
58. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Histoire de l'habitation*, p. 7.
59. Caillois, "De la féerie," 1:9.
60. Pick, pp. 1–36.
61. For the pleasure of monsters see Daston and Park, *Wonders*; and Stafford, *Body Criticism*, pp. 257–59. For Augustine and others on the etymology of monsters, see Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, pp. 108–30.
62. Rattier, *Paris n'existe pas*, pp. 17–19.
63. For Mayeux, see Menon, "The Science of Deformity," and "The Image That Speaks" for a variant of my figure in an 1831 lithograph.
64. Foucault, *Les Anormaux*, pp. 75, 84–85.
65. Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, p. 62.
66. Ibid., pp. 41–42: "Le mot monstre d'après son étymologie . . . ne peut donc être appliqué qu'à des êtres assez remarquables pour attirer les regards, pour frapper vivement les esprits des spectateurs. . . . Un monstre est, pour le vulgaire, un être dont l'aspect étonne et presque toujours même, offense les regards."
67. Stafford, *Body Criticism*, pp. 254–55.
68. Nye, p. 73.
69. Discussed in Poliakov, "Le Fantasme des êtres hybrides," p. 115.
70. Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 2:371.
71. Michelet, *Journal*, 1:702: "La France seule organique, apparaît comme une statue antique, la Vénus ou l'Hercule. Les autre nations? Ou monstres: empires d'autriches, de Prusse, Italie, Espagne même; ou organisées sur un principe hétérogène, donc inférieur."
72. Raudot, *De la décadence*, p. 45; Pick, p. 58.
73. Foucault, *Les Anormaux*, pp. 267–69.
74. Rosario, *The Erotic Imagination*, p. 59.
75. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, "Essai sur l'origine" (1852), col. 348.
76. Cuvier, *Recherches sur les ossemens fossiles*; and Cuvier and Brongniart, "Essai sur la Géographie minéralogique des environs de Paris," translated in Rudwick, *Georges Cuvier*, pp. 59–67 and 146–51.
77. See Cuvier, "Discours préliminaire," in *Recherches sur les ossemens fossiles*; and the translation and commentary in Rudwick, *Georges Cuvier*, pp. 173–252.
78. Cuvier and Brongniart, "Essai sur la Géographie minéralogique des environs de Paris" (1808), translated in Rudwick, *Georges Cuvier*, p. 133.
79. For his closeness to Cuvier see Van Eck, pp. 216–40; and Baridon, pp. 153–62.
80. Fernand Boisard, in *L'Illustration, journal universel*, 24 January 1852, p. 55: "cette admirable esprit d'induction qui faisait reconstruire à Cuvier tout un animal antédiluvien à la seule inspection d'une dent ou d'une vertèbre."
81. Cuvier, *Essay on the Theory of the Earth*, pp. 69–71.
82. Ibid., pp. 68–69.
83. Jameson, *Sacred and Legendary Art*, p. 26.
84. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 8:246–47.
85. Ibid., 1:23.
86. Ibid., 8:248–49.
87. Ibid., 6:246.
88. For Pierrefonds, see Foucart, *Viollet-le-Duc*, pp. 164–69; and for Grandville, see Kaenel, "Le Buffon de l'humanité," pp. 22–26.
89. Boitard, p. 65, translation in part from Rudwick, *Scenes from Deep Time*, pp. 166–67.
90. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Histoire de l'habitation*, pp. 1–2. See Bressani, "Notes on Viollet-le-Duc's Philosophy of History," p. 327.
91. Reproduced in Foucart, *Viollet-le-Duc*, p. 148.
92. Rudwick, *Scenes from Deep Time*, p. 240.
93. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 7:521.
94. Cuvier, *Recherches sur les ossemens fossiles*, 1:49.
95. Morel, *Traité des dégénérescences*, p. 461.

Chapter Five

1. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Lettres inédits*, p. 12.
2. Ibid., pp. 11–12.
3. Leniaud, *Jean-Baptiste Lassus*, p. 19.
4. Baudelaire's response is beautifully analyzed in T. Clark, *The Absolute Bourgeois*, p. 174. For images of the barricades see Agulhon, Le Men, and Moulonguet.
5. For this drawing see Winston and Winston, p. 124; and for the sack, Limouzin-Lamothe, pp. 125–34. For the politics of the family see Foucart, *Viollet-le-Duc*, p. 36.
6. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Lettres d'Italie*, p. 124.
7. Terdiman, "1848," p. 705, and "The Mnemonics of Dispossession," p. 175.
8. Hetzel, pp. 9–11.
9. Germer, p. 160.
10. Cited and translated in Maxwell, p. 212.
11. See Adhèmar, p. 40 n. 120.
12. Baudelaire, *Oeuvres complètes* (1975–76), 2:554.
13. See Le Men and Moulonguet, pp. 20–21.
14. Germer, p. 163.
15. See the discussion by Germer, pp. 161–63.
16. See Childs, pp. 176–77; Stoll; and the excellent catalogue edited by Rütten, Jung, and Schneider.
17. Kaenel, "Le Buffon de l'humanité," p. 27.
18. Étex, p. 16.
19. Ibid., p.35.
20. Hamon, p. 169.
21. Balzac, "Monographie du rentier," cited in Kaenel, "Le Buffon," p. 27.
22. Hamon, pp. 164–65.
23. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 6:240.

24. For Traviès see Farwell, pp. 149–68; and Cuno, p. 28.
25. Toussenel, *L'Esprit des bêtes*, p. 1.
26. Ibid., p. 71.
27. Ibid., p. 82.
28. Toussenel, *Les Juifs*, p. 118.
29. His liking for cats is described in letters published in E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Lettres d'Italie*, p. 205. For the drawings see Foucart, *Viollet-le-Duc*, cat. nos. 610–13.
30. For cats see the work on Manet's *Olympia* cited in Bernheimer, p. 291.
31. Kete, p. 118.
32. Toussenel, *Les Juifs*, p. 120.
33. Chevalier, p. 419.
34. Agulhon, "Le Sang des bêtes," p. 248; and Corbin, "Le Sang de Paris," in *Le Temps, le désir et l'horreur*, pp. 215–25.
35. Romieu, quoting Lauren Meillet, *Discours politiques et littéraires sur Corneille Tacite* (1628), in Romieu, *Le Spectre rouge*, p. 18: "Je conclus que la multitude populaire est une monstre terrible, furieux, inconstant, léger, précipatatif, paresseux."
36. R. Michel, p. 9.
37. Ibid., pp. 6–14.
38. See Corbin, "Les Limousins de bâtiment" in *Le Temps, le désir et l'horreur*, p. 201; and Gaillard, p. 14, for temporary migrant workers, masons in particular, who lodged in the deteriorated center.
39. Truant, pp. 35 and 275.
40. Cited in Chevalier, p. 414; P. Michel, p. 456.
41. Eugène Sue, *Les Mystères de Paris*, ed. Pauvert (1965), 1:85: "Chouette au parvis Notre Dame . . . Vieux monstre."
42. Jonathan [Jean-Philippe Schmit], *L'Abîme*, pp. 117–31; see Driskel, "The 'Gothic,' the Revolution and the Abyss," pp. 201–8; as well as Leniaud, *Les Cathédrales*, pp. 83–86.
43. Sue, *Le Juif errant* (Brussels, 1845), 13:10. For the iconography of cholera see Bourdelais.
44. Ibid., 13:25–34; the quotation comes from p. 26.
45. Ibid., 13:12.
46. Hetzel, p. 438.
47. Gueyton: "Bâtisez bourses, casernes, théâtres, fontaines, embarcadères dans le style qui vous plaira, mais pour nos vielles églises, conservez-nous-les et laissez-nous bâtir de pareilles."
48. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 1:22.
49. Christian Amalvi in *Le Goût du Moyen Âge*, p. 33, has seen the taste for gargoyles specifically as expressed in Victor Hugo's novel as linked directly to an anticlerical trend.
50. Rosario, *The Erotic Imagination*, p. 63.
51. Veuillot; see Gough, p. 233.
52. Gough, p. 50.
53. For this and other anticlerical images see Driskel, *Representing Belief*, pp. 30–35.
54. Leniaud, *Viollet-le-Duc*, p. 50.
55. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 2:391–92.
56. Auzas, *Les Grandes Heures*, p. 36.
57. Ibid., p. 172.
58. "2 sculpteurs ont commencé la bête d'angle placée sous le portail sud devant représenter un aiglon destiné à la balustrade de la galerie."
59. Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment*, p. 179.
60. "*Te Deum* solonel qui sera chanté dans la cathédrale le 1er Janvier à l'occasion de la reélection du President de la Republique."
61. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, "Céremonies," pp. 3–12. The occasion is also described in Truesdell, pp. 34–38; and Leniaud, *Jean-Baptiste Lassus*, pp. 181–82.
62. De Tocqueville, *Souvenirs*; and Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, are discussed in Terdimann, "1848"; the citation of De Tocqueville's *Souvenirs* is on p. 706.
63. Hugo, *Notre-Dame of Paris* (1978), p. 150.
64. Fournel, p. 397.
65. Truesdell, p. 39; for the eagle, Boureau; and for the French *coq*, Pastoureau.
66. Truesdell, p. 63.
67. Mérimée, *Oeuvres complètes*, p. 63.

Epilogue to Part I

1. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 8:14.
2. Loyer, "Neo-Gothique et politique en France," p. 61.
3. See Dakyns, pp. 54–75, for the best account of this turn against the Gothic.
4. Michelet, 1869 preface to the *Historie de France* and the first volume of his *Histoire du XIX siècle* (1872), cited in Dakyns, p. 57.
5. Michelet, *Histoire de France au seizième siècle*, 7:clix. At the end of his preface to *Histoire de la renaissance*, *Histoire de France*, 6:110.
6. Laurent-Pichat, cited in Dakyns, p. 115.
7. Eugène Garcin, article from October 1869, cited in Dakyns, pp. 115–116.
8. Étex, pp. 14–15.
9. Ibid., pp. 15–16.
10. T. Clark, *The Absolute Bourgeois*, p. 71.
11. Ibid.
12. Castagnary, pp. 137–41.
13. Marcelin, "Paris Démoli," *Le Journal pour rire*, n.s., no. 183, 31 March 1855. For other satires see Gerken, pp. 74–76; and Des Cars and Pinon.
14. Jordan, pp. 198–201. See also Sutcliffe, p. 36; and Pinkney, pp. 88–89.
15. Schmit, *Les Églises gothiques*, p. 162; quotation from Montalembert and Didron, "Réparation de cathédrale," p. 118.
16. Haussmann, *Mémoires*, 3:554. See also Gaillard, p. 33.
17. Castagnary, p. 83: "N'expriment-ils pas dans leur trinité fatidique les forces essentielles à toute société qui se dével-

oppe: la *Religion*, la *Justice*, la *Charité*."
18. Jordan, p. 199.
19. Veuillot, p. 10.
20. Castagnary, pp. 28–29.
21. Ibid., p. 35.
22. Ibid., p. 40.
23. De Goncourt and de Goncourt, p. 876.
24. T. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life*, p. 66.
25. Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, p. 336; and see also the discussion of ruins in Maleuvre, *Museum Memories*, pp. 272–78.
26. The drawing, which appears in a letter from Viollet-le-Duc to Geoffroy-Dechaume, is reproduced in G. Viollet-le-Duc, "La Flèche," p. 49. The recent restoration also revealed a second portrait of the architect as one of the kings on the facade; see *Monumental 2000*, p. 29.
27. See Middleton, "Viollet-le-Duc's Academic Ventures"; and for the text of the lectures, E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Esthétique*.

Chapter Six

1. Charles Méryon, letter of April 1854, London, British Library, Add. MS 37015, fol. 375: "Ce monstre que j'y ai représenté existe, et n'est en aucune manière une oeuvre d'imagination." Cited in Ducros, no. 710.
2. London, British Library, Add. MS 37015, fol. 239.
3. For the large literature on Méryon's *Le Stryge* see Collins. Fundamental is the article by Holcomb, "*Le Stryge de Notre-Dame*." The published sources I have found most useful are Harold Wright's revision and English translation of Loys Delteil's 1907 catalogue, cited hereafter as Delteil-Wright, as well as three exhibition catalogues by Ducros; Burke; and Stuffmann. Schneiderman's most recent catalogue raisonné is, by comparison, "woefully inadequate," as David P. Becker's review shows, but I have referred to it along with the Delteil numbers for easier reference.
4. For the traditional iconography and pose of melancholy, see the fundamental study by Panofsky, Saxl, and Klibansky; and for modern melancholy see Chambers; Hauptman; and Pensky, pp. 21–25.
5. For the subsequent popularity of the image see Mason, p. 121; and chap. 9 below.
6. Abraham and Torok, p. 137.
7. See Geffroy, p. 114; Drost, p. 242; and Ackerknecht, p. 462.
8. Delteil-Wright, no. 59; Schneiderman, no. 64.
9. See *Catalogue de Portraits*, p. 17, no. 185: "Le Stryge—superbe épreuve du deuxième état."
10. Delteil-Wright, no. 24; Schneiderman, no. 20. The appearance of the chimeras in this etching was first pointed out by Reiff, "Viollet-le-Duc and Historic Restoration," p. 18.
11. Letter written in Paris, 16 August 1847, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Est. Res. 4 Yb3 1673, pièce 3, Jean Ducros, no. 371.
12. Hamerton, pp. 14–15.
13. Maxwell, p. 231.
14. Baudelaire, letter to Auguste Poulet-Malassis, 8 January 1860, translated in Baudelaire, *Selected Letters*, pp. 141–42. Baudelaire was referring to the tenth state of Méryon's *Le Pont-au-Change*; see Burke, p. 63.
15. Hamerton, p. 15. For bird symbols see Le Clezio; and Maxwell, pp. 231–32; and for the Baudelaire story see Baudelaire, *Selected Letters*, p. 141.
16. Verdier, p. 225.
17. Monnier stole Méryon's poem word for word but made his own etched version of the ape chimera; see his *Eaux-fortes*, pp. 27–28.
18. London, British Library, Add. MS 37015, fol. 382.
19. London, British Library Add. MS 37015, fol. 375; the translation is a modified version of the one in Holcomb, "*Le Stryge de Notre-Dame*," p. 152.
20. For sculptures of medieval *luxuria* see Weir and Jerman, pp. 58–71.
21. Schneiderman, no. 44, p. 91.
22. Henriques, p. 224. For prostitution see Corbin, "Les Prostituées," in *Le Temps, le désir et l'horreur*, pp. 117–39.
23. In the last twenty impressions printed for Delâtre in 1861 before the plate was canceled by striking a great X through it, another inscription, a number 1, was added inside the oval to designate its place in the series of views of Paris. The canceled plate is illustrated in Geffroy, p. 57.
24. Méryon's *Mes observations sur l'article de la Gazette des beaux-arts*, from a manuscript preserved in the Toledo Museum of Art; see Verdier, p. 225.
25. Holcomb, "*Le Stryge de Notre-Dame*," p. 151.
26. For Méryon's fantasies of flight and femininity in his 1861 etching *Tourelle, rue de l'École de médecine*, see Junod, "Meryon en Icare?" pp. 81–97; and Hereaus, pp. 35–37.
27. *Trésor de la langue Francaise*, 15:978. *Strige*, or *stryge*, is defined as "Monstre fabuleux représenté avec une tête de femme, un corps d'oiseau et des serres de rapace, qui passait pour sucer le sang des nouveau-nés et des jeunes enfants." The second quotation comes from the *Grand Dictionnaire universel du XIXe siècle* (Paris: Pierre Larousse, 1875), 4:1140.
28. Collin de Plancy, *Dictionnaire infernal* (1818): "C'étaient de vieilles femmes, une femme libre stryge ou prostituée." Denis, p. 92: "Les *lamies* et les *stryges* creatures affreuses entrées sans doute par la tradition juive sur quelque mythe de l'antiquité grecque." I find it more plausible that Méryon knew the term through these sources, rather than the more scholarly publication of a twelfth-century text by Walter Map, as suggested by Holcomb, "*Le Stryge de Notre-Dame*," p. 152.
29. Hugo, *Notre-Dame of Paris* (1978), p. 317: "Jeune fille

bohème, vous avouez votre participation aux agrapes, sabbats et maléfices de l'enfer, avec les larves, les masques et les stryges?"

30. Pressouyre, p. 148. Verdier, p. 232 n. 33, points out that in Méryon's etching "*Le Stryge* ought to be written *La Stryge*."

31. London, British Library, Add. MS 37015, p. 386: "d'un vice qu'on rencontre malheureusement chez les marins mais qui est plus fréquent dans l'autre contrées plus lointaines."

32. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Res. Yb 3 1673, p. 2, letter of 23 July 1857: "Chez la plupart de ces peuples, nous constaterons peut-être la présence du vice de sodomie qui naît soit des principes vicieux inhérents au sang, soit des influences d'un climat brûlant, soit des difficultés de l'alimentation, du manque l'espace ou, enfin, de l'indolence naturelle des individus. Loin de moi maintenant la pensée qu'on ne doive par tous les moyens possibles chercher à corriger de ce vice odieux et repousant (tant dans l'acte que par ses déplorables résultats)."

33. Junod, "Voir et savoir," p. 22.

34. Canler, p. 318: "les passages des Panoramas, de l'Opéra, la galerie d'Orléans au Palais Royale . . . où ils se promenent deux à deux."

35. Copjec, p. 38.

36. London, British Library, Add. MS 37015: "L'organe de l'instinct sexuel l'enflammait . . . contribuer à ruiner l'entendement de mon pauvre ami."

37. Cullerier's *Précis iconographique*, p. 53, pl. 2.

38. London, British Library, Add. MS 37015, fol. 386, letter by Foley to Dr. Méryon, 11 January 1856, Foley describing Louise as a "veritable modèle de tout ce que le vice scrofuleux peut accuseuler les plaies affreuses sur un sens individu. Le corps de cette femme-fille était en quelque sorte un ulcer général; les yeux, le nez, la bouche, les seules partes de son visage qu'il s'était impossible de masquer n'étaient pas exemptes de fléau général. La souffrance continuelle avait rendu cette enfant acariate et maussade. . . . Elle n'aime pas Méryon, elle le considérait comme un fou et en avoir peur." For "Hédérosyphilis" see Corbin, *Le Temps, le désir et l'horreur*, pp. 141–69.

39. Translated in Wedmore, pp. 44–45.

40. Maxwell, p. 231.

41. Translated in Baudelaire, *The Mirror of Art*, pp. 287–88; and Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, p. 231.

42. Letter from Baudelaire to his mother, 4 March 1860, cited in Labrusse, p. 126. See also Crary, p. 20.

43. Fournel, *Paris nouveau*, p. 384, translated in Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, p. 400.

44. The author describes himself as an "Ancien élève polytechnique, lieutenant de vaisseau démissionaire. Docteur-médecin [Disciple d'Auguste Comte et l'un de ses treize exécuteurs testamentaires]." Méryon's intellectual sympathies with his friend's utopian Fourierist notions are hinted at in Junod, "Voir et savoir," p. 40, rather than the Rosicrucianism suggested by Yarnall, p. 294.

45. Foley, p. 393.

46. Letter of 4 March 1860, in Baudelaire, *Dernières lettres*, pp. 132–33.

47. Méryon's lithograph is not listed in any of the catalogues of his work, but attention was drawn to it by Holcomb, "*Le Stryge de Notre-Dame*," pp. 153–54, who also provides the translation cited here and the transcription of the original text:

> Dis-moi, grotesque esprit par qui l'homme est singé,
> Charge des temps passés, démon de la matière,
> Que contemples-tu donc, hideux monstre de pierre,
> Dans ce gouffre béant où ton oeil est plongé?
> Rêves-tu le Sabbat? Sur ton crâne rongé,
> Attends-tu pour hurler un baiser de sorcière,
> Comment se pétrifia ta face grimaçière
> Ou Satan t'avait jugé, ou bien Dieu t'a jugé;
> Et quand auprès de toi, bondissante et craintive,
> D'Esméralda passait la compagne captive
> De l'étreindre en tes bras tu ne fus pas tenté;
> Pour l'Enfer comptes-tu les noyés de la Seine,
> Ou n'es-tu que le masque autrefois redouté
> L'étrange épouvantail d'une époque lointaine?

48. Janson, pp. 287–325.

49. Baridon, p. 159.

50. Letter to Poulet Malassis, 8 January 1860, translated in A. Miller, p. 8 and app. 3.

51. Letter from Foley to Dr. Meryon, 11 January 1856, London, British Library, Add. MS 37015; cited in Drost, p. 242.

52. Baudelaire, *Oeuvres complètes* (1975–76), 2:667. For the relationship between artist and poet see Bradley, pp. 587–609.

53. See Fusco and Janson, pp. 276–78, catalogue no. 146, for Fremiet's apes.

54. See Camille, "The Abject Gaze."

55. Schneiderman, frontispiece; Delteil-Wright, no. 17a.

56. Bouillon, pp. 36–38; A. Miller, p. 10.

57. Abraham and Torok, pp. 136–37.

58. See Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," 14:247.

59. Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, p. 360.

60. *La Morgue*, Delteil-Wright, no. 35; Schneiderman, no. 42.

61. Cobb, p. 45.

62. J. Pennell, *Adventures*, p. 204.

63. Monestier, p. 175.

64. Rapport of 10 December 1990 to the Commission des monuments historiques, in the Bibliothèque de patrimoine.

65. Tissot, pp. 305–9.

66. Brière de Boismont in "De l'influence de la civilization sur le suicide," *Annales d'Hygiène*, 1855, cited in Chevalier, p. 474.

67. De Nerval, p. 305. For de Nerval and Parisian visual culture see the catalogues by Buffetaud and Avice.

68. For Hugo's earlier statement, "il n'y a pas d'homme qui n'ait sa chimère," see Hugo, *Le Rhin*, p. 323. The notion of modern archetypes in Baudelaire is from Berman, p. 148.
69. Baudelaire, "Chacun sa chimère," in *Oeuvres complètes*, 1:282–83; translation by Francis Scarfe from *The Poems in Prose*, 2:40; see also the discussion in Bompiani, p. 403.
70. Méryon's death is described in Delteil-Wright; Jouve, pp. 28–29; and Bouvenne, p. 28.

Chapter Seven

1. E.-E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire*, 8:33.
2. For Viollet-le-Duc as an early convert to photography, see Christ, "Mérimée, Viollet-le-Duc," p. 644; Bergdoll, "A Matter of Time," p. 105; and O'Connell, pp. 139–45.
3. Talbot's famous phrase appeared in his *Some Account of the Art of Photogenic Drawing* (London: R. and J. E. Taylor, 1839), p. 6, as cited in Schaaf, p. xviii.
4. The groundbreaking article which inspired this chapter is Janis, "The Man on the Tower of Notre Dame," pp. 13–25; but see also Borcoman, *Charles Nègre*, pp. 34–35; and Heilbrun, no. 106, pp. 218–19. The photograph was published in Newhall, p. 30.
5. See the sale catalogue, *Collection, Le Secq*, pp. 18–19. For Le Secq's life see Jammes and Janis, p. 207; and Janis and Sartre's catalogue.
6. For beards, see Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment*, p. 177.
7. St. John, 1:6.
8. See Robb, pp. 325–26.
9. Hugo, *Oeuvres poétiques*, 1:341.
10. Charles Nègre, letter to his father, in Heilbrun, p. 347.
11. Nègre, "Note," in Heilbrun, p. 353; and Rouillé, p. 133.
12. *La Lumière*, 18 May 1851, p. 56, cited in Janis and Sartre, p. 12: "effets qui nous font rêver, des motifs simples qui nous émeuvent, et des sites dont les silhouettes puissantes et hardies nous éttonent et nous effrayens."
13. Heilbrun, no. 107, pp. 222–25.
14. *Knickerbocker* 14, no. 6 (December 1839): 560–61.
15. Janis, p. 17. For technical aspects here I have also relied heavily on Snyder.
16. See Jammes and Janis, p. 52; Néagu, pp. 15–23; and de Mondenard, "La Mission héliographique."
17. Henri de Lacretelle, *La Lumière*, 19 February 1853, p. 29.
18. Henri de Lacretelle, *La Lumière*, 20 March 1852, p. 50, reprinted in Rouillé, p. 129; English translation in White, Jammes, and Sobieszek, catalogue no. 20.
19. Henri de Lacretelle, in *La Lumière*, 28 August 1852, p. 143.
20. Hugo, *Les Miserables*, p. 595. The literature on the flaneur is vast, but I have found most useful in addition to Benjamin's own writings Frisby; and Buck-Morss, pp. 185–89.
21. Cited in Buck-Morss, p. 185.
22. Heilbrun, p. 220.
23. Benjamin, "The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire," in Benjamin, *Charles Baudeliare*, p. 40.
24. Benjamin, "Paris—the Capital of the Nineteenth Century," in Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire*, p. 170.
25. Cited in Buck-Morss, p. 186.
26. Fournel, *Ce qu'on voit dans les rues*, p. 268.
27. See Baudelaire, "The Salon of 1846," in *Oeuvres complètes*, 2:494. Translation from *Baudelaire: Selected Writings*, p. 105.
28. The passage from the *Journal des tailleurs* is cited in Harvey, pp. 23–24.
29. Reproduced in Gautrand, *Blanquart-Évrard*, p. 77.
30. Baudelaire, "The Salon of 1848," in *Oeuvres complètes*, 2:710. See also Kempf, p. 10; and for the demonic dandy, Favardin and Bouëxière, p. 79. A good visual survey is Schickedanz.
31. Henisch and Henisch, pp. 86–87; and *Paris et le daguerrotype*, cat. no. 24.
32. See Rice, *Parisian Views*, p. 126.
33. Balzac, "Monographie du rentier," in *Les Français peintes par eux mêmes*, translated in Hamon, p. 166.
34. De Nerval, "Notre-Dame de Paris," in *Oeuvres complètes*, 1:338. This poem was first linked to Le Secq by Janis and Sartre, p. 12.
35. De Nerval, *Oeuvres complètes*, 3:645, translated in *Selected Writings*, p. 363.
36. De Nerval, *Selected Writings*, p. 359.
37. De Nerval, *Oeuvres complètes*, 3:651, and *Selected Writings*, p. 374. For de Nerval's use of Dürer's *Melencolia I* engraving and other aspects of his medievalizing imagination, see Buffetaud, p. 146.
38. Hamon, p. 196.
39. Janis and Sartre, no. 376, p. 148.
40. For the smock see T. Clark, *The Absolute Bourgeois*, p. 14; the print is reproduced in Rütten, Jung, and Schneider, p. 212.
41. See Martin-Sabon, p. 8, no. 8009.
42. Reproduced in *Skulptur im Licht der Fotographie*, p. 347.
43. Foucault, "Photogenic Painting," p. 83.
44. See de Mondenard, *Photographier l'architecture*, cat. 36, pp. 53 and 174–75.
45. Heilbrun, p. 217. Henri Le Secq also made a closer study of the angel; see Janis and Sartre, no. 377, p. 148. For its medieval date see Erlande-Brandenburg, "Nouvelles Remarques," p. 296.
46. *Paris qui s'en va et Paris qui vient*, no. 13, pp. 76–80.
47. Ibid.
48. Gross, p. 133.
49. Ibid., pp. 133–34.
50. Robida, pp. 31–32.
51. See the essays by Guignard; and de Mondenard, "L'Album

des monuments de France."
52. Mieusement, pls. 61–63. Guignard, p. 30, dates a photograph on the balustrade to 1892. Some of Mieusement's albumen prints in the study collection of the Mediathèque de l'architecture et de patrimoine bear the date 1893, but some 1895.
53. For some of these usually horizontal views encompassing two or three chimeras at once, see Bridaham, p. 104. These are related to the eighteen recently sold at the *Galerie de Chartres* on 18 October 1997, lot 112, described there as circa 1880.
54. Vidler, p. 27.
55. See the Dossier on Mieusement, Médiatheque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, 80/01/73. Enlart and Rousel's 1904 *Catalogue des photographies* includes a description of Mieusement's role in popularizing "notre art nationale" as well as ads for "cartes postales illustrées" by Neurdein Frères. Mieusement's commercial deals are summarized in Guignard, p. 34.
56. Joubert, p. 87. This is the argument of Rice, *Parisian Views*, pp. 44–45.
57. I base this tentative identification on the fact that this albumen print is part of the chimera series (and identical in size to the other images in it) and on the close relationship between the features of this man and those of a recently published 1905 drawing of Mieusement reproduced in Guignard, fig. 10, p. 35.
58. See Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 5:469, discussed further in chap. 8 below.

Chapter Eight

1. Mérimée, *Lettres à M. Panizzi*, pp. 230–31.
2. This is underlined in Dr. Witkowski's retelling of the story in *Les Licences*, p. 59. For the tradition of the monstrous feminine see Creed.
3. De Amicis, p. 23.
4. T. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life*, p. 36. For more on the spectacularization of Paris in relation to women see Gaillard, pp. 547–60; M. Miller; Green, *The Spectacle of Nature*; Bowlby; and Rifkin, "Total Ellipses," pp. 101–13.
5. Schwartz, pp. 151–59.
6. Wolff, "The Invisible *Flaneuse*," p. 148; but Gleber, pp. 61–62, makes a strong counterclaim.
7. Freud, "Medusa's Head," pp. 273–74.
8. Adeline, p. 6
9. *Paris à l'eau forte*, p. 40, "par H. T." Baschet, n.p., also reproduces the painting; see Janis, pp. 15 and 24. I have been unable to locate the present whereabouts of the painting, which was no. 72, p. 14, in the 1873 Salon catalogue, *Explication des ouvrages*.
10. Erlande-Brandenburg, *Notre-Dame*, pp. 230–32; and *De plâtre et d'or*, pp. 157–71. For Viollet-le-Duc's representations of women in his writings, see Michon, "Viollet-le-Duc et la femme médiévale."
11. Gautier, "Elias Wildmanstadius, ou l'Homme-Moyen-Âge," cited in the excellent chapter on the myth of "la cathédrale" in Prungnaud, p. 288.
12. Zola, *La Rêve*, p. 862.
13. Ibid., p. 826.
14. Ibid., p. 862.
15. Ibid., p. 863; see also Berg, p. 87.
16. Rodin, *Les Cathédrales de France*, p. 110.
17. Mâle, p. 12.
18. Huysmans, *La Cathédrale*, p. 226. For Jameson see Holcomb, "Anna Jameson"; and for Félicie d'Ayzac, see Prache, "Félicie d'Ayzac."
19. See Adams, p. 101; and Mane, pp. 127–39.
20. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 5:469.
21. Ibid., p. 199; see also Roudinesco, p. 46.
22. Charcot, "Leçon d'ouverture," p. 336, cited and discussed in Goldstein, p. 234.
23. Lacassagne, *Vacher*, p. 288.
24. For the "new woman" see Silverman; L. Clark; and Showalter, pp. 38–76; and for the importance of procreation, Mossmann.
25. For theater see Chu, pp. 172–75.
26. Del Balzo, p. 286: "Dans cette ville théâtrale, chacun devaient tout à la fois spectateur et acteur."
27. Briquet, cited in Goldstein, pp. 218–19; see also Goldstein, pp. 209 and 213.
28. Goldstein, p. 214.
29. For virile hysterics and regression see Evans, p. 39.
30. See Didi-Hubermann; and Rapetti.
31. Freud, "Report on My Studies in Paris and Berlin" (1886) and "Hysteria" (1888), cited in McGrath, p. 165.
32. Freud, *The Letters*, p. 185; cited in McGrath, p. 153.
33. P. Richer, p. 169.
34. Ibid., pp. 166 and 168–69.
35. Ibid., p. 170.
36. Cabanès, p. 40.
37. Roudinesco, pp. 40–41.
38. Witkowski, *Anatomie*.
39. Witkowski, *Le Nu au théâtre*, p. 15.
40. Ibid., p. 15; and Witkowski, *L'Art profane*, 1:37.
41. See Wolff-Quenot.
42. Witkowski, *La Génération humaine*, p. 176.
43. Witkowski, *L'Art profane*, 1:451–53; for the restoration see Foucart, *Viollet-le-Duc*, pp. 154–55.
44. Witkowski, *Autobiographie*, p. 14.
45. For the drawing see Bercé and Foucart, p. 38, no. 31.
46. Jordanova, pp. 87–90.
47. McLaren, pp. 182–206.
48. Freud, "Medusa's Head," p. 273.
49. Jordanova, p. 96; Dijkstra; and Freud, "Three Essays on

the Theory of Sexuality."
50. Huysmans, *Là-bas*, p. 141.
51. Huysmans, *The Cathedral*, p. 238.
52. Huysmans, "Félicien Rops," p. 82.
53. Huysmans, "Le Monstre," p. 123.
54. Ibid., pp. 123 and 126–27.
55. C. Bernheimer, p. 249, with further bibliography.
56. Huysmans, *À rebours,* p. 197. For prostitution see Bernheimer; and Corbin, "Les Prostituées du XIXe siècle et le 'vaste effort du néant,'" in *Le Temps, le désir et l'horreur*.
57. Huysmans, "Le Monstre," p. 138.
58. Ibid., pp. 127–29.
59. Ibid., p. 135.
60. Ibid., pp. 129–30.
61. Huysmans, *La Cathédrale*, pp. 116–17 and 169.
62. Huysmans, *The Cathedral*, p. 102.
63. Ibid., pp. 291 and 302.
64. Ibid., pp. 293–94.
65. Ibid., p. 303.
66. Huysmans, *Against the Grain*, pp. 101–2.
67. Huysmans, *Lettres à Théo Hannon*, p. 284.
68. Mayeux, cited in R. Gordon, p. 176.
69. Huysmans, *Le Quartier Notre-Dame*, p. 3. For Proust on Notre-Dame see Fraise, p. 342.
70. For snowy chimeras see *Le Tour de France: Album et Guide Touriste*, 15 Avril 1905. A number of Jouas's drawings are on display in the Musée de Notre-Dame next to the cathedral.
71. Huysmans, *La Cathédrale*, p. 116.
72. Huysmans, "Le Fer," p. 160.
73. Ibid., p. 156; translated in Cate and Schimmel, p. 35. For the "infundibuliform anus" see S. Murphy, pp. 64–65.
74. Adams, p. 108. See also Mane, pp. 127–39, for Adams's use of earlier scholarship on medieval cathedrals. For images of women in educational contexts see L. Clark.
75. Huysmans, *En rade*, p. 211.
76. Eggermont, p. 29; and *Eugène Laermans*, p. 78.
77. Huysmans, *En rade*, p. 211.
78. Magre, "La Cathédrale furieuse," in *La Montée aux Enfers*, pp. 50–52. See Prungnaud, p. 288.
79. Bonekamp, p. 19; Almy, p. 131, no. 83.
80. See the exhaustive literary analysis of this pairing by Vadé, pp. 5–18, and 72–81, who does not, however, mention the Hawkins painting.
81. For the sphinx in art see Demisch, pp. 188–96, who reproduces the Hawkins painting as figure 545.
82. Almy, p. 131.
83. Toussenel, *L'Esprit des bêtes*, p. 120.
84. *Nos Loisirs* 3, no. 14 (5 April 1908): 426.
85. For this interpretation see Soubiran, p. 261 n. 531.
86. Schiesari, p. 11; but see also Juranville.
87. Champsaur, p. 49.
88. Ibid., p. 42.
89. Ibid., p. 43.
90. Ibid., p. 46.
91. Ibid.
92. Ibid.
93. Ibid., pp. 47–48.
94. Ibid., p. 50.
95. Ibid., p. 54.
96. Ibid., p. 72.
97. Ibid., pp. 72–74.
98. Russo, p. 44.
99. Champsaur, p. 120.
100. Ibid., p. 154.
101. Ibid., pp. 250–51.
102. Lorrain, pp. 162–63.
103. For the term "invert," see Hekma; Nye, p. 108; McLaren, p. 177; and Rosario, "Histoires d'inversion."
104. Foucault, *Les Anormaux*, p. 58.
105. Lacassagne, "Péderastie," p. 130; Rosario, "Pointy Penises," p. 160.
106. Rosario, "Pointy Penises," p. 160.
107. Tardieu, p. 171.
108. Ibid., p. 163.
109. Rosario, "Pointy Penises," pp. 150–51.
110. Tardieu, pp. 206–7; see also Aron and Kempf, p. 59.
111. Tardieu, p. 205; see also Smith, pp. 83–99.
112. Garnier, *Anomalies sexuelles*, p. 520.
113. Tardieu, p. 182.
114. Canler, p. 318.
115. Witkowski, *L'Art profane*, 1:193. For the terms "homosexual," "invert," and "uranian" see Hekma; and Thompson, pp. 102–27.
116. Witkowski, *L'Art profane*, p. 36.
117. Canler, p. 320.
118. See Cahier, *Nouveaux Mélanges*, pp. 196–97; and Witkowski's discussion of a figure representing the vice of onanism at Chartres (*L'Art profane*, 1:220).
119. Serrurier, "Pollution," in *Dictionnaire des sciences médicales* (1820) cited in Aron and Kempf, p. 63.
120. See Snodgrass, p. 26; and Spens, no. 217, published as pl. 1 in Marillier.
121. For the other portrait by Evans, showing the sitter's profile without hands, labeled "The Gargoyle," see *The Book Buyer: A Summary of American and Foreign Literature* 12 (1895–96): 29.
122. Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, p. 193. For posing see Meyer, pp. 86–87.
123. Craft, p. 109.
124. Foucault, "Photogenic Painting," p. 84.
125. For the relationship between camp and melancholy see Lepenies, p. 120.
126. For Paris in the modern gay imaginary see Sibalis.
127. Rifkin, *Street Noises*, pp. 137–72, and "The Poetics of Space Rewritten," p. 147.
128. Quoted in Snodgrass, p. 162.

129. E. Pennell, *Life and Letters*, 1:255.
130. J. Pennell, *Adventures*, p. 204.
131. J. Pennell, *Etchers and Etching*, p. 34.
132. Ibid., p. 43.
133. Ibid., p. 33.
134. Wildridge, p. 7.
135. Hardy, pp. 293–300.
136. Firbank, *The Flower beneath the Foot*, in *The Complete Firbank*, p. 501.
137. Foote and Hook, p. 31; emphasis in the original.
138. Wilde, p. 223.
139. Halberstam, p. 162.

Chapter Nine

1. Le Corbusier, p. 5.
2. Brooks, p. 171; Prache, "Le Corbusier's Begegnung mit Notre-Dame in Paris," pp. 276–79; and Vigato, p. 84.
3. See Leland Hunter, p. 139; and for New York gargoyles, Reynolds, pp. 160–75. For a contemporary account of collegiate gargoyles see De Kay.
4. Grunenberg, p. 116.
5. In addition to Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, see Agamben, "Walter Benjamin and the Demonic"; and Sheringham, pp. 85–114.
6. Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p. 190.
7. For Benjamin, on wish images see Buck-Morss, p. 114.
8. Quoted in Schor, p. 211; James Douglas also quoted in Staff, p. 81.
9. For Marx on commodities, see Agamben, *Stanze*, pp. 72–75; and for Benjamin's discussion, *The Arcades Project*, pp. 7–8.
10. Schor, pp. 217 and 232. In 1932 the Compagnie des arts méchaniques took over Lévy-Neurdein, which also controlled the photographs of the Monuments historiques; see Schor, p. 219.
11. For the cultural impact of the destruction of Reims by German bombs see Dilly.
12. Éluard, p. 86.
13. Sitwell, p. 77.
14. Schivelbusch, p. 2. For the "son et lumière" see *La Féerie de Notre-Dame* 1964 script kept at the Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine.
15. See E. Cohen, p. 133, for Notre-Dame and tourism.
16. Brassaï, "The Concierge of Notre Dame," in *The Secret Paris*, n.p. See Warehime, pp. 49–50. For other artists' interest in the cathedral see Buisson.
17. Westerbeck, p. 36; and Warehime, p. 117.
18. *Minotaure*, no. 7, 1937, p. 71.
19. G. Breton, frontispiece.
20. Brassaï, "Preface," in *The Secret Paris*, n.p.; see Warehime, pp. 108–14.
21. Foster, p. 164; and for the surrealist admiration of Méryon, A. Breton, *L'Art magique*, p. 196.
22. Aragon, pp. 28–29.
23. See Ernst, p. 43, for a shadow of a chimera used in the background.
24. A. Breton, *L'Amour fou*, p. 69, *Mad Love*, p. 47.
25. Breton et al., p. 18; see Bancquart, pp. 69–70; and Melly, p. 56.
26. Foster, p. 190.
27. See Prévert, *Fatras*, p. 254, and *Les Prévert de Prévert*, nos. 43 and 44, p. 29. A third collage to use the chimeras places the single-horned goat demon (no. 17), again cut out from a postcard, inside the Sainte-Chapelle; *Les Prévert de Prévert*, no. 42.
28. Rifkin, *Street Noises*, p. 52. See also *Les Prévert de Prévert*, nos. 42 and 42.
29. Foster, p. 189.
30. Schor, p. 241.
31. Boureau, p. 7.
32. For this exhibition see Cone, p. xxii, figs. 70 and 71; and Kaplan, pp. 130–31.
33. Montluisant, *Explication très curieuse*, as discussed in Baltrusaitis, *La Quête d'Isis*, p. 26.
34. See Aubert, *Notre-Dame de Paris.*
35. Fulcanelli, *Le Mystère des cathédrales*. On this tradition in general see also Geyraud, *L'Occultisme*, pp. 69–78; and Dubois, *Fulcanelli Dévoilé.*
36. Fulcanelli, p. 53.
37. Ibid., p. 54.
38. Ibid., p. 93.
39. See the catalogue put out by the Librairie du Compagnonnage, 2 rue de Brosse 75004, Paris; and for myths of origin, Bayard.
40. Resnick, p. 84.
41. Adorno, *In Search of Wagner*, p. 90.
42. Simons, "Shaded by Gargoyles."
43. Temko, p. 305. For photographs of the parvis in front of Notre-Dame on the day of liberation see Perrault, p. 195.
44. Temko, p. 13, and see pp. 171–81 for "the façade is France."
45. Lyotard, p. 31.
46. Wildmerding, p. 50.
47. Janis, p. 26, dates the Coburn print to 1901, but Verena Villiger, "Der Fotograf zwischen Kunstwerk und Kunstgeschichte," in Billeter, p. 61 and cat. no. 22, dates it to 1910.
48. Dated ca. 1904 and reproduced in Steinorth, p. 61.
49. For "American Gothic" see Edmundson; and Davenport-Hines, pp. 266–74.
50. J. Arms, *John Taylor Arms, American Etcher*, p. 4; Pelletier, pp. 292–93.
51. D. Arms, p. 131.
52. Dorothy Noyes Arms, cited in Pelletier, p. 300.
53. I am grateful to Brigitte Yeh for this information. For the 1948 etching see Pelletier, p. 302.

54. Nin, p. 253.
55. Kennedy, p. 17.
56. Morancé, p. 12.
57. Temko, pp. 230–31.
58. Cited in Gunning, pp. 65 and 76.
59. See Gunning, pp. 64–68.
60. For the list of films see the essay by Jean Mitry in Georgel, pp. 771–79; and for medieval stereotypes in film more generally see De la Bretèque.
61. Quoted in Riley, pp. 11–12.
62. Rebello, pp. 132–34. For Disney's medieval sources see Allan.
63. Ibid., p. 134.
64. Cited in Buck-Morss, p. 470 n. 77.
65. Goldberger, pp. 26–28.
66. *New York Times*, 6 July 1975.
67. Greenberg, p. 90.
68. Worringer, p. 77.
69. See the essays collected in Grunenberg.
70. Hersey, pp. 174–75.
71. For the *Human Gargoyles* see Kerekes.
72. Brian Dumlao, www.geocities.com/HollywoodHills/5963/garrgrep.htm.
73. Tgs.gargoyles-fans.org/gargbible.html is the Web site. See also http://tgs.gargoyles-fans.org.
74. Foucault, "Photogenic Painting," p. 89.
75. Braga, p. 126.
76. Stewart, pp. 135–36.
77. Ibid., p. 151.
78. Mitchell, p. 282. See also Buckland for film dinosaurs.
79. Known as Poogoyle, the produce has apparently been discontinued; see the article by Laurel Walker, "Gardening Catalogs Strive to Put an Odor of Spring in Air," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 9 June 1997.
80. Stewart, p. 57.
81. Ibid., p. 124.
82. Derrida, p. 387.
83. Camille, *Image on the Edge*, p. 78.
84. Kristeva, pp. 258–59.
85. Cynthia Reese McCaffety, "France's Gargoyles," *Hemispheres*, pp. 120–21. [No further details on this work have been found.—*Eds*.]
86. Jay. For Virilio see Conley, p. 170; see Baudrillard, pp. 8–9, for his discussion of iconoclasm; and Eco, p. 19.

Epilogue to Part II

1. Benjamin, cited in Agamben, "Walter Benjamin and the Demonic," p. 153.
2. Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, p. 463, and for a discussion of his concept of the dialectical image, Buck-Morss; and Pensky, pp. 211–19.
3. For the restoration of stone sculpture see Centre des monuments nationaux, *La Sculpture monumentale*; and Fonquernie, pp. 20–29.
4. Carlier, "Documents," pp. 215–16. See also Réau, p. 907.
5. Herpe, pp. 155–56.
6. Schlumberger and Champigneulle.
7. Champigneulle.
8. Loyer, "Notre-Dame Lavée"; and B. Vitry.
9. Rapport 1 Mai 1980, rapport 21 Oct 1980.
10. For these recent debates in France see Chastel, *Architecture et patrimoine*; Choay; Recht, *Penser le patrimoine*; and the collection of essays *Patrimoine, temps, espace*.
11. Simons, "Rescuing Notre-Dame and Sickly Gargoyles."
12. Žižek, p. 123.
13. Noce, 1999.
14. Riegl, "The Modern Cult of Monuments."
15. M. Mayer, p. 148.
16. Jouffroy, p. 40.
17. For racial tensions during Ennadre's photographic campaign see Jouffroy, pp. 28–29. For a non-Western artist's view of the pensive demon see the painting by Kazuko Inoue (1905–80) reproduced in Buisson, p. 76.
18. Virilio and Foucart, pp. 82–85.
19. Latour, pp. 1–12.
20. For a recent photograph by Martine Franck of a group of Japanese tourists in rapt attention before a guide pointing with an umberella at the statues of the central portal along with a marvelous image of a "gardien" up on the balustrade dwarfed by the chimeras, see Gautrand, figs. 110–11.
21. Freedman and Spiegel, p. 677; and the introduction to J. Cohen.
22. Biddick, p. 57.
23. De Certeau, *The Writing of History*, p. 5, and for "what can be seen," *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p. 108.
24. Derrida, p. 97.
25. Augé, p. 177.
26. Dinshaw, p. 21.
27. Claretie, p. 60. For the tradition of ruined Paris see Maccia.
28. Claretie, p. 344.
29. Benjamin, *Illuminations*, pp. 259–60 and 244.

Bibliography

Unpublished Sources

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